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THE One for AMIGA GAMES

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MERCENARY III
Novagen's Latest 3D Extravaganza

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Gun-Toting Mayhem From MicroProse

PACIFIC ISLANDS AND PUBLIC DOMAIN
Fully Playable Demo And The Best PD Around

JOHN MADDEN AMERICAN FOOTBALL
Electronic Arts Gets Offensive

NO DISK? SEE YOUR NEWSAGENT

DISK THE ONE 7 SNEAK PREVIEW

Visit interesting places, meet new people... and then kill them! In this playable demo of Empire's

PACIFIC ISLANDS

The follow-up to Team Yankee

PLUS! A deluge of PD games, courtesy of 17-Bit Software

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Disk Format by Rob Northen Computing

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:
- **MORE LEMMINGS** – A Life-Saver's Guide
- **VIDEO KIDS** – Are You Overdosing On Action?
- **KNIGHTMARE** – A Dream Conversion?

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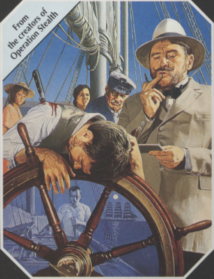
THE MARK

CRUISE FOR A CORPSE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AMIGA

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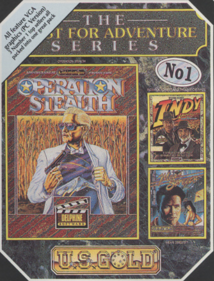
THE QUEST FOR ADVENTURE SERIES No. 1


All feature VGA graphics (PC Version) 3 Number 1 top sellers all packed into one great pack
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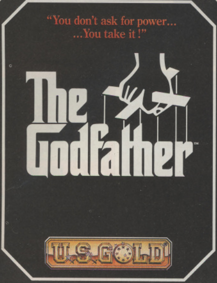
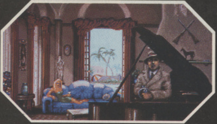
OF A WINNER

THE GODFATHER™ – ACTION GAME


"You don't ask for power...
...You take it!"
The Godfather
U.S. GOLD

AMIGA



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Domination, wealth, power and justice are all part of the game plan. Flex your muscles in the rough and tough world of The Godfather, crushing other Don's scheming plans to take a piece of your action! Nerves of steel and a cool head are needed to keep the bad guys at bay.

- *Digitised sound effects.*
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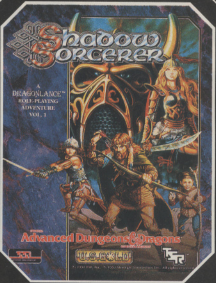
Shadow Sorcerer
A DRAGONLANCE™ ROLE-PLAYING ADVENTURE VOL. 1
Advanced Dungeons & Dragons
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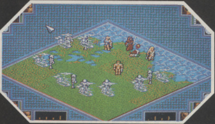
TSR

ATARI ST



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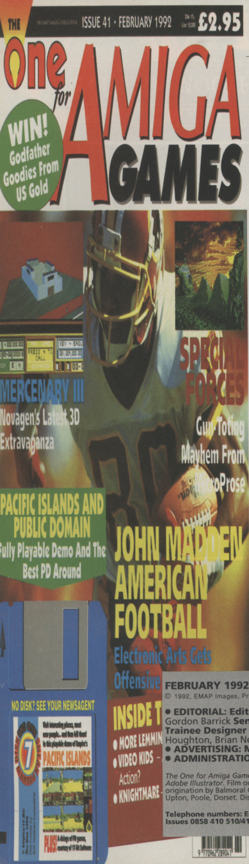
THE
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PACIFIC ISLANDS AND PUBLIC DOMAIN
Fully Playable Demo And The Best PD Around
JOHN MADDEN AMERICAN FOOTBALL
Electronic Arts Gets Offensive
NO DISK? SEE YOUR NEWSAGENT
INSIDE T
MORE LEMMIN
VIDEO KIDS – Action?
KNIGHTMARE
PACIFIC ISLANDS
PLUS!

CON

1992 is going to be a great year for the Amiga. It's going to find itself a little brother (the Amiga A300) and a wise old uncle (the CDTV). It will also become the first computer on the moon and will feature every week in *Neighbours* and *Emmerdale* (sorry, I've been listening to Commodore's hype for just a touch too long). But with all of these changes going on, let's hope that we the people of the USA (Using Standard Amigas) aren't left out in the cold by all of this 'repositioning' and other marketing mullarkey. The A500 (or 500P, or whatever configuration you've got on your table) is still without a doubt the best home computer that money can buy – and there's still a lot to be wrung out of in programming terms. Let's hope that the powers that be in the world of software publishing don't suddenly decide to sell their houses and move to Japan (where their hearts have been for so long now) – after all 1992 is going to be important for one other reason... it will be the year when Commodore sells its millionth Amiga in Britain. Can they really afford to ignore us?

Ciarán Brennan

6 THE SNEAK PREVIEW DISK

Who would ever have thought that we could cram so much onto one disk? The follow-up to *Team Yankee – Pacific Islands* is yours to command, as well as a whole bundle of fantabulous Public Domain software.

8 NEWS

Mirrorsoft saying goodbye, Archer Maclean's new 3D pool game, Bullfrog's *Populous World Editor*... all the late-breaking and early rising news brought to you by our intrepid hacks.

20 PROFILES

Well-known coding superstar and recluse Paul Woakes is just one of the people that open their hearts to us this month. James Hawkins of MicroProse is the other.

24 LETTERS

If you want to wax lyrical about anything, anyone and anywhere, this is the place. Be it about the price of games, the size of boxes or the way Spurs were knocked out of the FA Cup (drat!).

28 WORK IN PROGRESS

Domark has entered the wide, wide world of role-playing games with *Shadowlands* and we are there to see what it's all about. We also head up to Liverpool to check out the latest chapter in the Beast saga. *Shadow Of The Beast III* is the name and stunning visuals, amazing audibles and

52 Red, 42, 38... hut, hut, hut! Familiar cries for both American Football and Mega Drive-owning John Madden fans. Check out our review...

FEBRUARY 1992

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even some playability) is the game.

36 POINTS OF VIEW

Are computer games ruining your health? At great personal risk to their own bodies, both readers and programmers take it in turn to play at Anne Robinson, offering their own views on whether too much *Kick Off* leads to cancer. Kilroy beware!

39 MICROPROSE COMPETITION

Haven't you always wanted to cover someone in paint? You know you have! And now, thanks to us and MicroProse, you can win a day at a paintball site, battling the forces of good and evil.

41 REVIEW

Once more unto the Breach dear friends. Who's going to get a shining star – and who's going to get a merciless slagging off? Highlights include *Mercenary III*, *John Madden American Football* and *Harlequin*. Lowlights, on the other hand, include *Red Baron*, *Rubicon* and *Tip Off*.

72 BUDGET

We're not asking £25.99. We're not asking £20.99. No, we're not even asking £15.99. No way madam! Every game in this section, and that includes *3D Pool*, *Jet Set Willy*, *James Pond* and *Manic Miner* (we'll even throw in this amazing synthetic leather shammy) can be yours for under a tenner!

74 ARCADES

Another trip to the seaside pleasure palaces with John Cook. Virtual Reality is the big thing this month, so strap on your helmet and take a look inside.

77 DEMOS

Gordon Houghton puts on his protective goggles, his anti-radiation suit and his rubber wellingtons and sifts through the piles of PD that made it his way. Games, art, sound and utilities all come under the proverbial myopic microscope.

80 GODFATHER COMPETITION

Let us make you an offer you can't refuse. Get your grubby mitts around an amazing replica Uzi 9MM. Don't worry parents, it's not real and can't fire any bullets. Don't worry kids, it looks real enough to impress your friends!

82 TIPS

Tricky games? Not a problem! It's a four-pager special this month in Brian Nesbitt's little world. *Lemmings* and *Magic Pockets* both stretch across a quartet of pages and are backed up by some of the choicest *MicroProse Golf* hints around. We have acheived coolness.

98 NEXT MONTH

If all of the above wasn't enough for you, then take a look at what's happening next month. But hey, don't blame us if it gets silly!

TATTAGLIA
PUBLIC TELEPHONE

GAMES FEATURED THIS ISSUE

AGONY Psygnosis (Review)	65	
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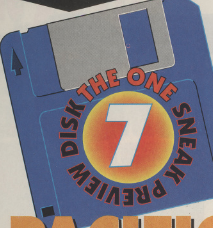
THE ONE SNEAK PREVIEW DISK
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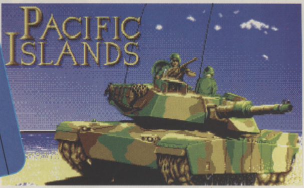


PACIFIC ISLANDS

YOU'VE HAD SIMULATIONS of jet fighters, stealth bombers, attack helicopters and even foot soldiers, but tank simulations have always been pretty thin on the ground. Things have just changed, though, with the arrival of *Pacific Islands*. This game doesn't put you in command of just one tank, or two tanks, not even three tanks. Ladies and gentlemen, this once-in-a-lifetime offer puts you at the forefront of no less than 16 modern-day, top of the range, very high quality tanks.

Pacific Islands is the follow-up to the innovative *Team Yankee* and plays in much the same way. Most of the design, controls and presentation are the same as the original, so anyone who's played the first game will probably be able to get straight into our demo. For those of you who have never experienced the joys of commanding your own tank platoon, it might be worthwhile checking out the following instructions before you plonk yourself behind the wheel of a multi-million dollar piece of hardware.

HOW TO PLAY

THE INITIAL SCREENS are fairly self-explanatory. Just follow the on-screen instructions to get to the equipment screen, then select Default Team and click on the icon in the top left-hand corner to get started. Read the briefing and click on the crossed swords to start the battle proper.

From here things can get a little tricky unless you know what icon does what, so here's a brief run-down:

GENERAL ICONS

- Quit Game
- Pause Game
- Time Display
- Strength Histograms
- Rank

SCREEN SELECT ICONS

- Expand View
- Map Screen
- 3D View
- Status Screen

3D VIEW ICONS

- Dead Stop
- Engine Smoke
- Infra-Red View
- Rotation And Compass Display
- Zoom View
- Laser Range-Finder

WEAPONS

- H.E.A.T. Shells
- SABOT Shells
- TOW Shells
- Smoke Shells
- Machine Gun

MAP ICONS

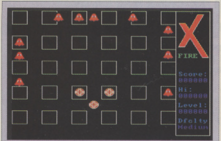
- Estimated Time of Arrival
- Scroll Map
- Zoom Magnify
- Zoom De-Magnify
- Wide Formation
- Vee Formation
- MPH Slider Bar
- Narrow Formation
- Line Formation
- Column Formation
- Right Echelon Formation
- Left Echelon Formation
- Wedge Formation

PUBLIC DOMAIN GAMES

INSTEAD OF THE USUAL playable demos, this month we thought we'd try something a little bit different. You've seen them many times before in the Demos Showcase section, but you've never quite known what they are. To help enlighten you to the world of PD and to show you some of what's on offer, we give you a sample selection of just a few of the games available for around a pound.

Of course, Public Domain is more than just games: you can also expect to find, among others, graphics, slideshows, animations, music and utilities. Our regular section, the Demos Showcase, takes a look at the latest in PD each month, reviewing what's hot and what's rot and telling you where to get them. Many of today's top graphic artists, musicians and even a well-known up and coming software house (Team 17) started life in the PD world. Yes, the people who brought you the incredible Alien Breed once messed around with scrolly messages and psychedelic colour blurs. Check out the Demos Showcase on page 77 for more details.

17 BIT
Software



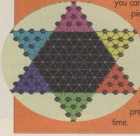
X-FIRE

X-Fire is a simple little shoot 'em up which is more playable than it looks. Your task is to stay alive for as long as you can, by blasting the aliens before they blast you. Using the joystick, move your ship in and out of the corridors and fire at will.

CHINESE CHECKERS

Checkers (or draughts as we call it) is often enjoyable enough as it is, but over in China they play it with a bit more flair. For a start, there are six players and nobody takes anybody else's pieces. The idea is to move all of your pieces into the pyramid opposite yours. Pieces move along the lines one space at a time.

If another piece is in the way (either yours or an opponent's) you can jump over it as in normal checkers, and you can keep jumping over pieces as long as there is a space to land in. Doing this, you can travel over long distances in one move. It gets easier to understand as you play it and with more than one opponent, things can get pretty hairy in next to no time.



KAMIKAZE CHESS

We've all played chess at some stage or another, but *Kamikaze Chess* is completely different: the aim is to lose! All the usual rules of chess apply, except that if you're able to take one of your opponent's pieces, you have to.

One or two players can take part, each trying to let the other win. Expect lots of obviously bad moves and silly plays in this one!

THREE-UP'S 'HAND IN'

As a special bonus, we've included a sampled version of that massive hit *Hand In* by the popular rhythm and beat combo Three Up (no, we've never heard of them either but according to Jools 'Party Monster' Watsham they're popular at house parties). Just load it up, sit back and enjoy the harmonious tunes that bellow forth.

THIRTY-ONE

There's nothing like a nice game of cards to pass the time, but have you ever played *Thirty-One*? The idea is simply to get more points than your opponent by the time one of you 'knocks'. Each player is dealt three cards and then takes it in turns to draw one from the deck. The idea is to get as many points in one suit as possible (with a maximum of 31). As soon as you have a legal score, it's shown in the window between the cards. Whenever you feel like declaring, just click on the window and whoever has the highest score will win.

LOADING

To get going with your disk, just put it in the drive when the workbench screen appears and wait for the menu to appear. Then select the required program and wait for it to load.

DISK TROUBLES

Nothing in life is certain (apart from death and taxes) and that goes for cover disks more than anything else. Anything can happen to those little blue squares between our distribution plant and your disk drive. They could get stomped on by a large tribe of native Amazons. They could be infected with the rare and damaging diskyitus disease as they travel over the English Channel. The might even fall apart as soon as you pick them up because of woodworm(?).

So, if your disk has any problems like these (or if just fails to work), send it to our disk replacement centre where one of our chief technicians will set about dissecting and diagnosing your disk's problem: PC Wise, Unit 3, Merthyr Industrial Estate, Merthyr Tydfil, Mid. Glamorgan, Cymru, CF48 4DR.

NEWS

FEBRUARY 1992

drop your jaw, as we take you through how **MIRRORSOFT** has fallen into confusion ... we pull the covers off **ARCHER MACLEAN'S** follow-ups to the cue-tabulous Jimmy White ... open the doors on masses and masses of **ALL NEW GAME NEWS** ... blow the cover on the latest **CHARTS** and **RECOMMENDED** games ... look backward, forward, upwards and sideways ...

ARCTIC TOYS

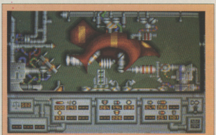
AND MUCH, MUCH MORE...

OCEAN TOPS XMAS CHART

IT'S BECOMING AS TRADITIONAL AS TURKEY and *The Sound Of Music* – yes, that's right, Ocean topped the Christmas charts again!

However, the Manchester-based giant did at least attempt to add a little variety to the proceedings by taking the top three positions (instead of the usual one) with ***WWF Wrestlemania*, *The Simpsons*** and ***Terminator II***.

In all, a massive 36.9 per cent of all of the games sold over the Christmas period had the familiar metallic blue logo on the box. Now we wonder who'll do the trick next year...



PALACE PRESENTS...

AFTER A PERIOD OF SOME CONSIDERABLE SILENCE, Palace Software makes its return with the announcement of two new titles – *Hot Rubber* and *Hostile Breed*.

The first of these is, as the name suggests, a motorcycle racing simulation offering one- or two-player action across 12 international circuits.

Hostile Breed (above), on the other hand, is a shoot 'em up with a hint of strategy, programmed by Bob Stevens (***Barbarian 2***), with graphics by Jo Walker (***Demoniak*** and ***Mega-lo-Mania***).

Both games are imminent.

GOLDEN WONDER

THE ONSLAUGHT OF CD TECHNOLOGY took another step forward this month, with JVC's announcement that it's to release a Sega-compatible CD games machine in Japan later this year. Going by the rather peculiar title of the Wonder Mega, the machine is basically a Mega Drive with a built-in CD player and has been jointly developed with Sony. It will take more than a year for the machine to reach these shores, but it should be on sale in Japan next month at a price of 44,800 yen (that's just short of £200).

REALITY IN YOUR HANDS!

YOU'D NEVER HAVE BELIEVED it was possible, but the world's first 'handheld virtual reality' game has just been released in the US! Developed by Bulletproof Software (the team behind *Tetris* and *Pipemania* on the Game Boy), *Faceball 2000* is a four-player future sport sim featuring 70 levels of play, continuous 360° movement and two arena types. But as for the virtual reality bit... your guess is as good as ours!

MAXWELL'S HOUSE BOUGHT BY ACCLAIM

CHANGES LEAVE DEVELOPERS IN THE DARK

THE RIPPLES WHICH SPREAD THROUGHOUT THE WORLD when Robert Maxwell plunged from his yacht in the Canaries finally reached the computer industry at the beginning of January when the corpulent publisher's software company, Mirrorsoft, was put into administration and then quickly sold to the American Nintendo publishing giant Acclaim.

THE STRANGEWAYS TEAM, whose *Apocalypse* (above right) has now gone to Virgin Games.

A recent newspaper report suggested that Acclaim had bought up all of Mirrorsoft's licences, trademarks and properties under development.

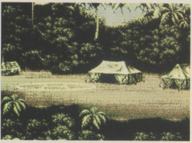
However, at the time of going to press, most of the development teams which had projects underway for Mirrorsoft were still unsure as to where their futures lay. The only team that seems to know exactly where it stands is Watford-based Strangeways, which was developing ***Apocalypse*** (see Work In Progress, Issue 39). The team claims to have severed all of its links with Mirrorsoft (thanks to a clause in the original contact nicknamed the 'Santa Clause' by Strangeways' Jason Perkins) and signed a deal to complete the same game for Mirrorsoft's rival publisher Virgin.

SENSIBLE'S JON HARE AND CHRIS YATES, like Vivid Image's Mev Dink (left) are awaiting more information.

Steve Turner, whose Graftgold was working on ***Fire And Ice*** when the collapse occurred, is particularly bitter about the whole incident: "It's another case of a major publishing company going under while owing money to its developers," he said. This is the fourth time that he has found himself in this situation, as Hewson, Activision and the BT-owned Telecomsoft all closed down while working under contract to Graftgold.

Two other major developers caught up in the situation, Vivid Image Design and Sensible Software, are remaining tight-lipped about the affair. Vivid Image's Mev Dinc feels that he'll be staying with Acclaim for the time being, while the Sensible chaps are sitting on the fence, waiting to see what the predominantly console-based firm will do.

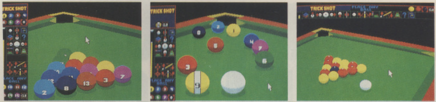
It's the fact that, up until now, Acclaim has been solely a console publisher which appears to be causing the developers most concern. However, it seems that with the purchase of Mirrorsoft, Acclaim will now take the opportunity to develop its (mainly licensed) titles on home computer as well as consoles (in the past, it has always allowed Ocean to publish its games on disk, a deal which has given Ocean such notable titles as ***The Simpsons***, ***Smash TV*** and ***WWF Wrestlemania*** to work with).



Commenting on the takeover in the computer games trade newspaper ***CTW***, Acclaim's European boss Rod Cousens said: "The most visible change that the deal will make is accelerating our entry into the home computer market. If you look at the success that Ocean achieved in 1991 with a number of titles that were Acclaim's licences, it is obvious that we will now be extremely aggressive with our own properties in this market."

If Acclaim does decide to invest in the disk-based market then it's likely that most of the developers mentioned above will renegotiate their contracts and the games will eventually be published on the Image Works label.

However, it's not known at this stage what will happen to all of the other labels in the Mirrorsoft stable, a list which included FTL, Spectrum HoloByte, PSS and Cinemaware. The situation should be clearer by next issue, when we'll bring you a further report.



IT'S EARLY DAYS YET, but as these screens show, things are already progressing quite nicely as *Jimmy White's Whirlwind Snooker* is turning into *Archer MacLean's 3D Pool*. Note the three different versions (each for its own variation of the rules): one with numbered balls; one with a striped nine and the 'standard' yellow and red variety.

SNOOKER STAR STARTS SEQUEL

SPURRED ON by the runaway success of *Jimmy White's Whirlwind Snooker*, Archer MacLean is currently working on not one, but two new projects in a similar vein.

Archer MacLean's 3D Pool (the current working title) is the most imminent of the two, retaining all the style, speed and playability of Jimmy White's, but incorporating three different styles of pool: eight-ball (the most common), nine-ball and 15.1 Rotation. In keeping with the pool theme, the table is a new, smaller shape, and Archer is planning to allow the player to define the colour of the cloth and all the balls are numbered, with a stripe running across the nine.

The numbers are causing something of a programming nightmare, though. At the moment they don't actually rotate, remaining in the same position on each ball as it moves around the table. They do change in size and the stripe on the nine rotates, but Archer is hoping to have the problem licked in time for the planned April release date.

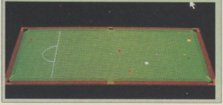
The other main problems facing him are trying to program three different types of game and three different sets of opponents and trying to work in all those 'cute' little faces on the balls. At the moment the transition from a number to a grinning set of teeth tends to look jerky and "not at all amusing", but Archer promises that there will be plenty of humorous touches in the final game.

The other project – ***Snooker 2*** (another working title) – is still only at the planning stage, but Archer is extremely enthusiastic about it. He claims to be going over the top with changes, with plenty of menus and sub-menus allowing the player to totally customise the way the game plays, right down to what viewpoints are required. Details are still sketchy, with Snooker 2 still a long way off (perhaps more than a year), but judging by the success of the original, orders will be flooding in months in advance.

Incidentally, Archer also has plans – although they're still *only* plans at the moment – to convert all of his cue-based games to the Sega Mega Drive. At last, a decent console sports simulation that isn't based on American Football...

TRICKSHOT WINNER

Phew! What an avalanche of entries we received for the all new Trickshot Trials competition which started last month. It took us forever to sort through them all, but when we did, this effort from Liverpool's Stephen Westhead came out as the winner. What you have to do is pot all the reds (but not the yellow) in one shot. Impossible? No... and you can find out for yourself when we include it on a future disk. Until then, keep sending those entries in, to: Trickshot Trials, The One, EMAP Images, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.



GAME BOY GAINS COLOUR

Nintendo is set to launch its counter-attack on the growing popularity of the Sega Game Gear and Atari Lynx handheld consoles with the release of a colour Game Boy, which will probably be launched in Japan in June. Apart from the obvious attraction, the Super Game Boy (the machine's most likely name) will feature one other major development which may make it instantly attractive to existing Game Boy owners – backwards compatibility (meaning you can play mono Game Boy games on the new machine). However, there's no need to start saving furiously just yet: with a summer launch in Japan and a possible entry into the US in August or September, it seems likely that the new machine won't make it into this country before early 1993.

ROBOCOD FIRM GETS ARTY

Electronic Arts has signed up Millennium as its latest affiliate label. The deal, which came as something of a shock when it was announced last week, involves worldwide distribution of all Millennium games and replaces the current set-up which ties the Cambridge-based firm to US Gold. The first games to be affected by the new arrangement will be *Kid Gloves 2*, which will be closely followed by Global Effect and an as-yet-unnamed cyber-combat strategy game. This isn't the first time that Millennium and Electronic Arts have worked together, as the US giant published *James Pond* for the Mega Drive console last year.

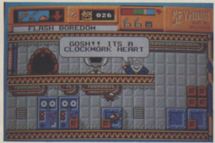
DARK DAYS FOR 'PROSE

ROLE PLAYERS SEEM TO BE the flavour of the month, with most of the mainstream publishers jumping onto what used to be very much a minority bandwagon.

The latest company to head for the dungeon is MicroProse, which will release its first Fantasy Role-Playing Game (an, if you will, FRPG) ***Darklands***, later this year.

Set in 15th Century Germany (a time of violence, powerless emperors and three popes!), Darklands puts the player in charge of… wait for it… a party of four adventurers seeking fame and immortality on multiple quests.

Players will be able to create millions of different character types by mixing between 26 separate attributes and skills, while an all-new 'adventure generator' system will keep those quests coming. Darklands will make its debut on IBM and compatibles early next month, and will be converted later this year.



SEYMOUR GOES TO HOLLYWOOD **joins the no-longer-long-awaited original *Dizzy* on Code Masters' Cartoon Collection.**

FIRST DIZZY OUT AT LAST

THOSE OF YOU WHO HAVE YEARNED for a chance to play Code Masters' original Dizzy game (which some of you may remember from your old 8-bit days) need wait no more, as the egg-like hero's first outing is to make an appearance on a new compilation, the five-game *Cartoon Collection*.

As well as the Dizzy outing, the collection also features three other never-before-released games, ***Seymour Goes To Hollywood***, ***Slightly Magic*** and ***Spike In Transylvania***, and one game that you may have seen before, ***CJ's Elephant Antics***.

Can't wait? Well you don't have to – the Cartoon Collection is out now, priced at £24.99.

JOOLS WATSHAM'S WHAT THE STARS ARE PLAYING

Move over Jonathan Ross, wave bye bye Terry Wogan – The One's very own chat expert is back with his chirpy, quirky style…

ANDY FINDLAY/ED CAMPBELL
(The Warp Factory)

Andy and Ed came bounding into the office shouting about 'garlic twin' (or something like that!) so I quickly sat them down and asked what they'd been up to. Funnily enough they'd come prepared with a list of the games they'd been playing (nice chaps): Mr. Findlay has been busy dribbling with *Kick Off 2*, but apparently he's still "absolutely sh*t" (pardon the language – some people!). Another of Andy's current favourites is the recently re-released *Manic Miner* (the Spectrum version has his vote, obviously), while Ed's been indulging in his own bout of nostalgia with *Monty Mole*. *Lotus Turbo Challenge 2* (of course) was also on their list, both Andy and Ed have been down to the local arcade playing *3D Golf* and Ed has been playing *RoboCod* ("just to see what the competition is like," he claims, but to his horror he found loads of ideas that they'd implemented in *Harlequin* – what a bummer!). As for future plans – the lads hope to get to work soon on a mafia-style RPG. Best of luck with it chaps!

MARK 'MAC' AVERY
(Core Design)

Mac has hardly played any games this month, as he's working on a "secret game" that he can't even whisper about. He's still managed to sneak in a few tries at *Eye Of The Beholder* though, with *Turrican* and its sequel serving as a relief from the tedium of work when it all becomes too much for him. Being a bit of a platform freak, you'd expect him to have been one of the first people to hog the office Mega Drive, but he claims that he's never even seen Sega's spiky little superstar. He has managed to make his way down to the local arcade though, where he slotted his shiny 10p pieces into the 3D driving game, *Rad Rally*.

SHAUN HOLLYWOOD
(Digital Image Design)

The Hollywood superstar… erm, sorry… Mr. Hollywood has booted out computer games this month and opted for the kiddies' favourites: the consoles. Yes, you guessed it, Mario has reared his ugly little head: "I really enjoyed it," Shaun enthuses. Apart from the mindless fun on his little grey box he's been finishing off the PC version of *Epic*. Because he spent most of his Christmas in London (busily drinking people under the table, I expect) he didn't get much time to play games, but he did manage a few hours with *Populous II*.

GRAEME ING
(Gremlin)

You'd think that, having left *Utopia* behind him, Mr. Ing would be happy enough to bash his joystick with a bit of blasting, but no – he's catching up with the direct opposition by working out with *Populous II*. But surely he's also had a stab at *Kick Off 2*, or *Final Fight*, or *Lotus Turbo Challenge 2*… or anything at all? Nope! He's a one game coder is old Graeme, still he could have picked a worse one…

TOP 10 FEBRUARY 1992

1	NE	**WWF WRESTLEMANIA** Ocean
2	NE	**POPULOUS 2** Electronic Arts
3	NE	**ROBOCOP 3** Ocean
4	NE	**BIRDS OF PREY** Electronic Arts
5	▼	**LOTUS TURBO CHALLENGE 2** Gremlin
6	▼	**ROBOCOD** Millennium
7	NE	**THE SIMPSONS** Ocean
8	▼	**JIMMY WHITE'S WHIRLWIND SNOOKER** Virgin
9	▼	**HEIMDALL** Core
10	NE	**NEW ZEALAND STORY** Hit Squad

2 YEARS AGO

1	NE	**FUTURE WARS** Delphine
2	NE	**KICK OFF – EXTRA TIME** Anco
3	NE	**CHASE HQ** Ocean
4	▲	**HARD DRIVIN'** Domark
5	▲	**SIM CITY** Infogrames
6	NE	**SPACE ACE** Readysoft
7	NE	**OPERATION THUNDERBOLT** Ocean
8	NE	**IT CAME FROM THE DESERT** Cinemaware
9	▼	**PRO TENNIS TOUR** Ubi Soft
10	NE	**GHOSTBUSTERS 2** Activision

REAP THE WILD WIND

YOU'VE BEEN A GOD IN *POPULOUS*, built urban centres in *Sim City* and even created worlds in *SimEarth*, but now French publisher Silmarils is asking you to reap the power of the wind in its own power game, *Storm Master*.

Set in the land of Eolia, where goods and armies are transported on the ever-blowing winds, Storm Master is a "power and creation simulation" which promises to combine war, politics economics and power-broking with a number of arcade action sequences.

As the newly-elected ruler of the land in question, it's up to you to control crop production, get involved with trade, set taxes, build windmills, design and construct your own flying machines and generally take charge of the whole shooting match.

Wouldn't you know it though? There's also another ruler of another land up to exactly the same thing, so it's inevitable that the two of you will end up in combat at some stage.

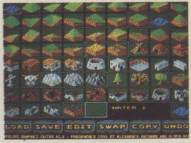
Storm Master is being distributed in this country by a new company, Daze Limited, and should be ready to slot into your Amiga's disk drive by the end of this month (no price details had been announced at the time of going to press).

A WORLD OF YOUR OWN

STRANGE AS IT MAY SEEM, there are some people out there who don't think that there's enough to do in *Populous*! Two of those strange creatures are two German programmers, Alexander Kochann and Oliver Reiff, who designed a "little world editor program" for the game as a birthday present for their friend George.

However, this little program soon grew to enormous proportions, so much in fact that the duo felt good enough about it to show it to Electronic Arts, who showed it to Bullfrog, who liked it a lot – and now you can even have a look at it yourself!

The ***Populous World Editor*** (bet it took them weeks to think of that one!) allows you to edit sprites and landblocks and set the parameters that define your population. Not only that, but the package also includes two new worlds and a new 500-world Conquest series – and all for £14.99!


WATER 1
LOAD
SAVE
EDIT
SWAP
COPY
UNDO
PULOUS GRAPHICS EDITOR V1.0 - PROGRAMMED 1991 BY ALEXANDER KOCHANN AND OLIVER REI

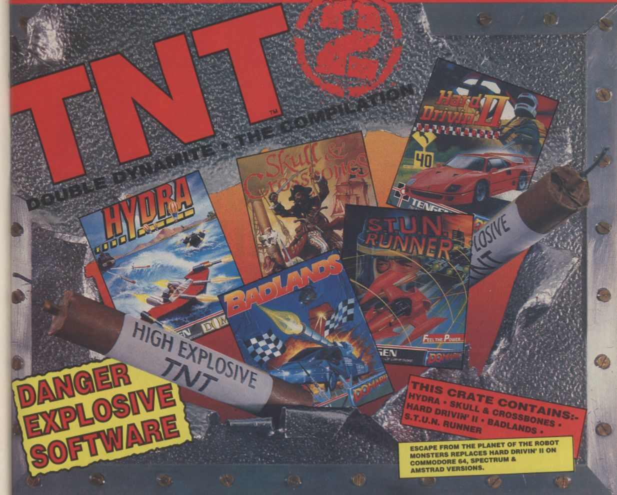
CRICKET CUP GRABBED

THE CRICKET WORLD CUP may still be almost a month away, but you can get stuck into the action straight away, as Soundware has released its official game of the series, *World Series Cricket*. Utilising a unique four-way screen split, the game will also feature side-on and overhead views of the action.

PECULIAR LICENCE AHOY!

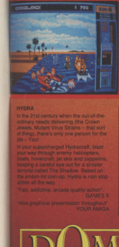
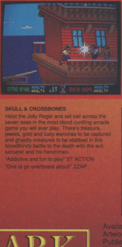
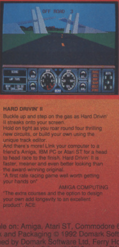
THOSE MASTERS OF THE BIZARRE at Loriciel have released what must surely rank as one of the most peculiar licensed games ever: *Steve McQueen – West Phaser*. Offering six levels of gunfight, ambush and shoot-out action the package is available now, wherever you usually get your dead film star games!

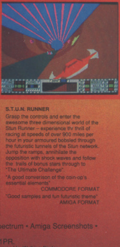
NGER • DANGER • DANGER • DANGER • DANGE



THIS CRATE CONTAINS:-
HYDRA • SKULL & CROSSBONES • HARD DRIVIN' II • BADLANDS • S.T.U.N. RUNNER

ESCAPE FROM THE PLANET OF THE ROBOT MONSTERS REPLACES HARD DRIVIN' II ON COMMODORE 64, SPECTRUM & AMSTRAD VERSIONS.



HYDRA

In the 21st century when the out-of-the-ordinary needs delivering (the Crown Jewels, Mutant Virus Strains – that sort of thing), there's only one person for the job – You!

In your supercharged Hydracraft, blast your way through enemy helicopters, boats, hovercraft, jet skis and zeppelins, keeping a careful eye out for a sinister terrorist called The Shadow. Based on the smash-hit coin-op, Hydra is non stop action all the way.

"Fast, addictive, arcade quality action".
GAMES X

"Nice graphical presentation throughout"
YOUR AMIGA

SKULL & CROSSBONES

Hoist the Jolly Roger and set sail across the seven seas in the most blood curdling arcade game you will ever play. There's treasure, jewels, gold and lusty wenches to be captured and ghastly creatures to be stabbed in this bloodthirsty battle to the death with the evil sorcerer and his henchmen.

"Addictive and fun to play" ST ACTION

"One to go overboard about!" ZZAP

HARD DRIVIN' II

Buckle up and step on the gas as Hard Drivin' II streaks onto your screen.
Hold on tight as you roar round four thrilling new circuits, or build your own using the unique track editor.
And there's more! Link your computer to a friend's Amiga, IBM PC or Atari ST for a head to head race to the finish. Hard Drivin' II is faster, meaner and even better looking than the award-winning original.
"A first rate racing game well worth getting your hands on"
AMIGA COMPUTING

"The extra courses and the option to design your own add longevity to an excellent product". ACE

BADLANDS

A ruthless sport has evolved in the Badlands – Sprint Racing with weapons. Customise your hot-rod car with high-velocity missiles, speed, tyres and shields. It's all out war on the tracks; ruthless, destructive and fun for one or two players.

"Recommended without any hesitation".
C & VG

"Frustrating, addictive, exciting, challenging, it will turn best friends into archenemies".
COMMODORE FORMAT

S.T.U.N. RUNNER

Grasp the controls and enter the awesome three dimensional world of the Stun Runner – experience thr thrill of racing at speeds of over 900 miles per hour in your armoured bobsled through the futuristic tunnels of the Stun network. Jump the ramps, annihilate the opposition with shock waves and follow the trails of bonus stars through to "The Ultimate Challenge".

"A good converison of the coin-op's essential elements"
COMMODORE FORMAT

"Good samples and fun futuristic theme"
AMIGA FORMAT

DOMARK

Available on: Amiga, Atari ST, Commodore 64 cass & disc, Amstrad cass & disc, Spectrum • Amiga Screenshots •
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S.T.U.N. Runner: Programmed by The Kremlin © 1990 Tengen inc. TM Atari Games Corporation.

RECOMMENDED

Our regular run down (or should that be run up?) of some of the best games from the last three issues. These should definitely be on your buy list...

ANOTHER WORLD
Delphine just keeps on progressing, this time leaving behind its tried and tested adventure system to utilise a mixture of polygon characters and moody backgrounds in this arcade action adventure.

93%

ROBOCOD
Dr. Maybe returns to wreak his revenge on secret agent James Pond, with a dastardly plan to turn every toy in the world evil. Great platform fun, with the word 'console' written all over it.

93%

FANTASTIC VOYAGE
Centaur's adaptation of the 1966 film produces a real feeling of actually being inside a body (yeuukk!). Also, the gameplay's about as good as you'll get from a movie tie-in.

91%

OH NO! MORE LEMMINGS
As the name suggests, those furry simpletons are back. Those who completed the original will still find a challenge, while those who are new to it all will find it completely impossible.

91%

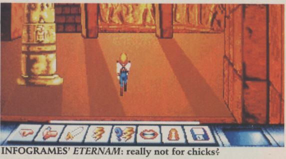
OUT 1
IN 00%
TIME

POPULOUS II
More godly manoeuvring on offer, as the Bullfrog team has done what seemed almost impossible – they've improved Populous! A score of 96 per cent needs little more explanation.

96%

GRAND PRIX
Just about the best darn driving sim that money can buy. Geoff Crammond has made this so realistic that you almost feel it when you crash. Your Amiga's not complete without it.

93%



INFOGRAMES' *ETERNAM*: really not for chicks?

MY HOVERCRAFT IS FULL OF EELS

OKAY, WE KNOW THAT IT'S ALL TOO EASY to have a cheap laugh at the expense of foreign letters and press releases, but since when could we resist a cheap laugh?

This month's victim is Infogrames, which announces its new adventure ***Eternam***, with the following immortal lines... "Stay on your seat, we'll start to discover the world of Eternam. A giagantic universe, for it is 10 times bigger than the one of ***Drakkhen***. You were lost in the world of Drakkhen? Then beware, Eternam is not meant for chicks..."

What the author really meant to say was that is a cartoon-style animated adventure with a zany sense of humour, which will hit the Amiga shortly. Price and release details are probably in the press release somewhere, but no-one in this office could find them. We did find out however that this is "only the first part of a grand sage" (your guess is as good as ours!).

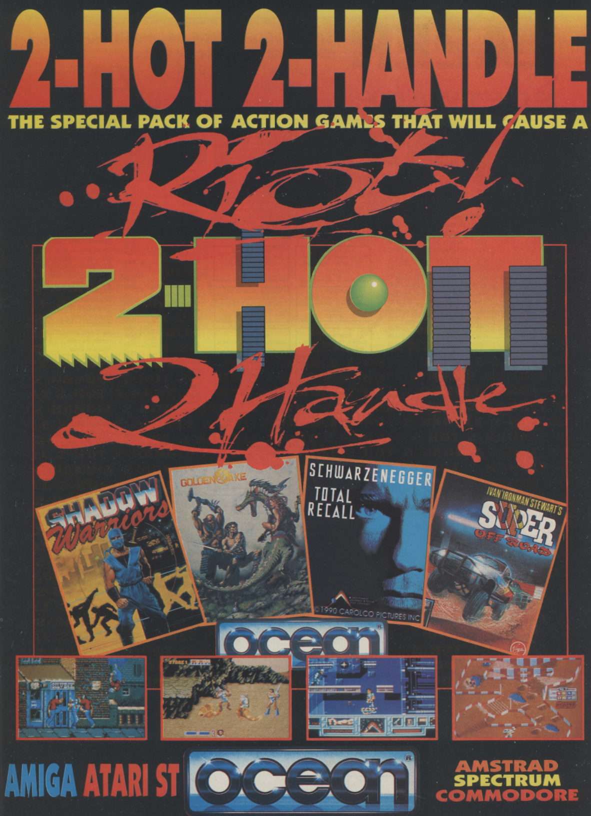
LASER BATTLES ERUPT IN LEEDS

DON'T LET ANYONE TELL YOU that it's grim up north anymore: The Empire Arcade in sunny Leeds has just opened the doors of the country's 21st Laser Quest arena, the Ultra Zone.

Laser Quest is an indoor combat game where players strap on electronic sensors and then zap each other with laser guns. The underground arena where all this high-tech carnage takes place features a spaceman's graveyard, a post-industrialist complex and a futuristic tube forest.

Each game in the Zone will cost £3 (with off-peak discounts for members and students), while a membership fee of £10 will also entitle the player to compete in a league for monthly prizes.

So, if you live in Yorkshire, or even if you're just visiting Leeds for the day (maybe to watch Gordon Strachan's merry men hammer your favourite footie team) then why not pop along to the Empire Arcade and tell them that ***The One for Amiga Games*** sent you (not that it will do you the slightest bit of good).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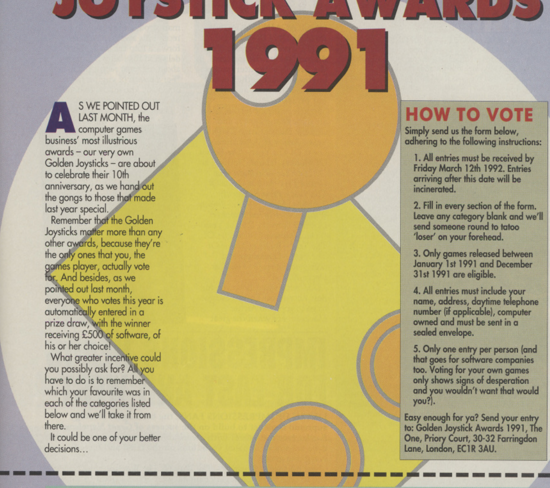
THE GOLDEN JOYSTICK AWARDS 1991



AS WE POINTED OUT LAST MONTH, the computer games business' most illustrious awards – our very own Golden Joysticks – are about to celebrate their 10th anniversary, as we hand out the gongs to those that made last year special.

Remember that the Golden Joysticks matter more than any other awards, because they're the only ones that you, the games player, actually vote for. And besides, as we pointed out last month, everyone who votes this year is automatically entered in a prize draw, with the winner receiving £500 of software, of his or her choice!

What greater incentive could you possibly ask for? All you have to do is to remember which your favourite was in each of the categories listed below and we'll take it from there.

It could be one of your better decisions...

HOW TO VOTE

Simply send us the form below, adhering to the following instructions:

1. All entries must be received by Friday March 12th 1992. Entries arriving after this date will be incinerated.
2. Fill in every section of the form. Leave any category blank and we'll send someone round to tatoo 'loser' on your forehead.
3. Only games released between January 1st 1991 and December 31st 1991 are eligible.
4. All entries must include your name, address, daytime telephone number (if applicable), computer owned and must be sent in a sealed envelope.
5. Only one entry per person (and that goes for software companies too. Voting for your own games only shows signs of desperation and you wouldn't want that would you?).

Easy enough for ya? Send your entry to: Golden Joystick Awards 1991, The One, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London, EC1R 3AU.

Best Graphics ....

Best Soundtrack ....

Best Simulation ....

Best Coin-Op Conversion ....

Programming Team Of The Year ....

Hardware Manufacturer Of The Year ....

Software House Of The Year ....

Game Of The Year ....

Worst Game Of The Year ....

NAME..............................

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THAT WAS THEN ▶▶ FEBRUARY 90

FEBRUARY 1992 MUST HAVE BEEN ONE HECK OF A COLD MONTH – temperatures dropped so low that even our front cover turned blue! Actually, this is one old cover of *The One* which really stands the test of time – it looks just as good today as it did two years ago. Not only that, but this cover was unique in that it marked the one and only time that we ever changed the logo from its usual orange and red tones… it makes you wonder why we never did it again!

Anyhow, we had to feature ourselves in the news pages that month, as The One had just walked away with the then-coveted Magazine Of The Year award (and well deserved too, although I've still never worked out why they took the team picture on a day when I wasn't in the office). Other stories included Ocean finally snapping up the rights to the wonderful *Rainbow Islands* (the sequel to which, *Parasol Stars*, is just around the corner) and the news that Virgin's *Infection*, which we'd reviewed four months previously, was being delayed due to "licensing problems." These proved so bad that game didn't actually come out until just a couple of months ago – talk about long-awaited!

The One
MAGAZINE OF THE YEAR
FOR 16-BIT GAMES
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WHEN HELL FREEZES OVER . . .
MIDWINTER

The Work In Progress team unearthed a couple of big names, which were eventually released to vastly different critical reactions. First there was Electronic Arts' *Imperium* (developed by a team which included Matthew Stibbe, who later went on to develop *'Nam* for Domark) which eventually became a reviewers' fave – then, however, came Ocean's *Nightbreed*, an attempt at at 'Cinemaware' game which fell a little short of achieving its ambition. Ever wondered why Ocean sticks to producing arcade games these days?

In the review section, I certainly warmed to *Midwinter* and gave it a massive 95 per cent; I also drove the point home about *Super Cars* (which notched up a more than respectable 87 per cent); Kati Hamza got on down with the pseudo-sequel to *Dungeon Master*, *Chaos Strikes Back* (94 per cent) and Gordon Houghton breathed life into *Dragon's Breath* by awarding it just one point short of the coveted 90.

Having received such a monstrous score for its wintry masterpiece, the chaps at Maelstrom divulged a few of the short cuts to far-out 3D graphics which they'd used to such good effect in Midwinter (and were to later re-use in *Flames Of Freedom*) in our Grafix tutorial feature. This easy-to-use feature included such handy hints as "The shade of the face is the cosine of the difference in the two angles" (it's been two years and I *still* don't understand it!).

Finally, just like the previous month we finished off with a brief glimpse back at the fast-disappearing 80's through a huge pair of rose-tinted specs. This time around we had a look at the Cs and Ds and remembered such long-demised notables as 'Camputers', 'Cascade' and CGL, and caught up with a number of people and firms who were very much alive and kicking, including Domark, Tony Crowther and Commodore. This particular feature was about to come to an untimely end though, as we realised that if we continued to publish it at a rate of only two letters per month, it would have taken us well into 1991!

• **Brian Nesbitt**

"FIRST I'D LIKE TO THANK..."

ONCE AGAIN LONDON'S INTERCONTINENTAL HOTEL was the venue and dinner jackets the uniform, as the British computer games business got together to pat itself on the back and hand out prizes to itself.

So here, without further ado, are some of the movers and shakers: Budget Game Of The Year – ***Xenon II***; Adventure Game Of The Year – ***The Secret Of Monkey Island***; Simulation Of The Year – ***Formula One Grand Prix***; Arcade Game Of The Year – ***First Samurai***; Technical Merit Award – ***Jimmy White's Whirlwind Snooker***; Licensed Property Of The Year – ***The Simpsons***; Developer Of The Year – Bullfrog; Game Of The Year – ***Lemmings*** and Software House Of The Year – Electronic Arts.

Our own award, however, for Best Acceptance Speech has got to go to good old Archer MacLean. For when the great man strode to the podium to receive his award, he leaned forward into the microphone and delivered the following eulogy about his most recent publisher: "For a bunch of virgins, they obviously know how to handle balls when they see them."

There was hardly a dry eye in the house.

IMPRESSIONS HEADS FOR EAST AND WEST

LISTEN UP IMPRESSIONS FANS, the born-again strategy supremo is all set to build on the success of *Great Napoleonic Battles* (see last issue) with a veritable feast of imaginative and, dare we say it, unusual variations on the tried and tested wargame genre.

First off there's ***Samurai – The Way Of The Warrior***, which allows you to take a force of mighty Samurai warriors on a quest to win back the lands once owned by your father.

Combining the "strategic planning of large campaigns with the intricate detail of man-to-man fighting," Samurai also puts you in charge of the kitty, as financial decisions are thrust upon your already creaking shoulders.

And when you've tired of Oriental warmongering (as if!), why not take to the high seas to discover America, as ***Discovery – In The Steps Of Columbus*** allows you to take the part of the most important Italian/American next to Don Vito Corleone.

As ever, there's more to this one than simply sailing about for a few months and then shouting "land ahoy!" For a start, you have to build your fleet (there's that old financial management aspect again!), become involved in sea battles (!) and race to find America before anyone else does (here's a clue – it's just south of Canada).

Both Samurai – The Way Of The Warrior and Discovery – In The Steps Of Columbus will be available over the next couple of months.

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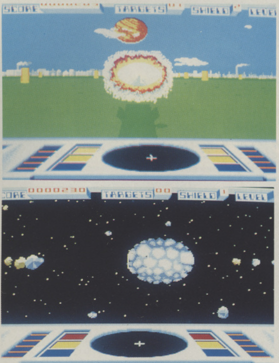


Although best known for the Mercenary series, Paul Woakes' repertoire also includes the odd shoot 'em up, such as Encounter, pictured here.

PAUL WOAKES

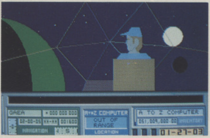
Programmer

PAUL WOAKES WANTED a home computer before there were any. So in 1975 he built one. He wrote his own version of BASIC and an assembler to program it.

His interest in writing games was fired up after he bought a 32K Atari 800 in 1982. On seeing a graphics programming exercise that Paul had worked on, an arcade enthusiast friend persuaded him to adapt it for use in a game. The result, a fast-moving, solid 3D affair (that later became known as 'real environment'), was *Encounter*, born in 1983.

With the UK computer industry still a mere infant, the big Atari market was in the US, where Encounter was first published. Hailed for its fast graphics and adrenalin-pumping action, it topped the charts. Woakes' conversion to the then emergent Commodore 64 followed, but by the time of completion he'd lost out so much on royalty payments that he retrieved the rights to his program. He formed Novagen Software to release Encounter into Europe in 1984, a company that is still his main vehicle for developing new ideas.

A useful by-product of the C64 version of Encounter was the fast cassette-loading system, Novaload. In producing C64 Encounter tapes, Woakes had added a routine that accelerated the then usual 20-minute Commodore tape load to just four minutes. Within weeks of the release, publishers and tape duplicators were knocking at his door. Woakes produced a utility for others to use under licence and although it was to become heavily imitated, it soon became the industry standard.



Then there was, and is, the *Mercenary* saga. Except for producing an exuberant shoot-em-up, *Backlash*, in celebration of the graphics capabilities of the 16-bit machines, Woakes has inhabited his semi-virtual worlds for seven years. In that time, a quantum leap has taken him from the wire-frame world of Targ (in Mercenary) to the massive solid-3D solar system created for *Damocles* which is now populated with interactive characters in *Mercenary III*.

Although a developing storyline links all three and each game has considerable depth, they are created in an unusual way. Other than in a very basic format – escape, avert a threat, defeat an adversary – the story isn't thought about until the playfield has been created.

Woakes' approach is to first come up with a believable environment. The game is then built 'live on the set'. At regular stages of development, he produces a utility incorporating the latest program features for his team to create the components: road networks and transport, buildings, decorative and functioning objects, spacecraft and characters.

SOFTOGRAPHY

- **Encounter (Atari XL, C64, Amiga, ST)**
- **Novaload (C64)**
- **Mercenary and The Second City (Atari XL, C64/+4, CPC, Spectrum, Amiga, ST)**
- **Backlash (Amiga, ST)**
- **Damocles (Amiga, ST)**
- **Damocles Mission 1 & 2 (Amiga, ST)**
- **Mercenary III (Amiga, ST)**

Bruce Jordan heads up Woakes' support team of graphics artist Mo Warden and design assistants Nick Bacchus and Neil Toulouse. Acting as 'editor', Jordan installs the game components and ends up with an intimate knowledge of the vast playfields.

In the last few months of development, Jordan links up with Woakes on the installation of gameplay and text. "This really is the fun part," he says. "All of the wacky ideas are Paul's. He has this weird sense of humour that comes through in the game. This is the time that the gameplay takes over. We say, 'wouldn't it be great if this could happen'. I go home, see him the next day and it does happen."

With Mercenary III now in the shops, what's next from Novagen? A lot of work that we don't see in the UK, for a start. An American version of Mercenary III will have text relating to the forthcoming presidential election and has to be re-timed for the NTSC system and have vehicles that drive on the right hand side of the road. Then there's on-screen text translations for Europe. It's touches like these that give the Mercenary saga a good following overseas.

And then? Paul's softography has no PC or console products, which may give a clue.

Brian Nesbitt

• *Mercenary III is reviewed on page 42.*

"NOW HAS THE 1991/92 FOOTBALL LEAGUE/NFL PLAYER DATA"

DIVISION ONE 92

"(The Midnight Oil) treat soccer in the sophisticated way Americans treat their national games."

– The Guardian

THE GAME. Everyone has his own ideas on what makes a soccer team "tick". Here is the opportunity to put into practice your own ideas. Operating from the English 1st Division you must build a squad to challenge for the league title, the FA and League Cups and the 3 European trophies. And as players age, rebuild the team while holding off relegation.

SQUADS/TRANSFER MARKET. In a 3 squad system (1st team squad, reserve squad and youth squad), use the continuous intake of youth players and training program to create a squad whose skills reflect your ideas. Supplement these skills with carefully selected transfer market acquisitions. As they age, veterans fade and youngsters develop, keep a sharp eye on the changing skills of your team.

SKILLS. All players have a balance of 5 skills (no "skill levels") which you must discover by experimenting with your team. Even more important will be your judgement about the effect of the particular team balance or skill combination on the outcome of a match, and subsequently a season of football. Suitable training can develop/enhance skills or sustain the stamina of ageing/injured players.

MATCH/STATS. Your judgement will be put to the test in this unique 4 minute match/stats simulation against accurately simulated opposition. This is the measure of your team and your most reliable source of information. There are displays of: match flow, two teams, player-with-the-ball, injuries, discipline, substitutions, in-match tactics, goalscorers, possession breakdown and performance assessment.

WHAT IS DIFFERENT ABOUT THIS GAME?

Sophisticated "AI" techniques replace "skill levels". Judgement replaces mental arithmetic. Intelligence replaces luck. Division One 92 is a simulation of the world of the soccer manager. Its fascination comes from its closeness to the real thing, its addictive quality is that of soccer itself.

HEADCOACH V3

"When it comes to the 4th down Headcoach has it". "Head Coach", "TV Sports Football" head to head.

(Pop Comp.)

THE GAME. HeadCoach is the complete American Football simulation. You take charge of the latest recruit to the NFL, and through skilful design of gameplans and the use of the college draft, build up a 45 man squad to keep your fans happy and win the Superbowl. Unlimited seasons and ageing players produce a realistic game of fluctuating fortunes.

THE MATCH. The match is a game in itself taking about 40 minutes to complete. With 26 offensive plays and 21 defensive plays, there is ample scope to match your game-plan to the skills of your squad, and exploit the weaknesses of the opposition. It's here where the strengths and weaknesses of your players are highlighted.

TRAINING CAMP. An opportunity to assess your players before they take the field. The appropriate coach will give you his view of the current form of any of the players and how they are performing in training. A 40 yard timed run will reveal their sharpness. Wide receivers, running backs, linebackers, cornerbacks and safeties need to shine here.

COLLEGE DRAFT. During the 16 match season, plus whatever playoff matches you achieve, you will find yourself praying for a second classy running back or wide receiver, or need to beef up your offensive line (too many sacks). The college draft should be used to find those stars of the future and make sure they're playing for you.

STATISTICS. The statistics centre will encapsulate your team's and your players' season. Total yards, rushing yards, passing yards, kick-off returns, punt returns (and averages for all these), interceptions, sacks... all these are kept for each match, the whole season, for the team and for each player. American Football is a game of stats and we retain that.

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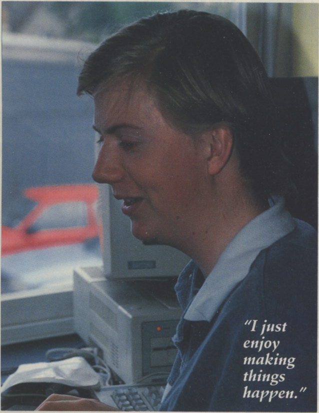


"I just enjoy making things happen."

JAMES HAWKINS

Project Manager with MicroProse

SOME PEOPLE WORK really hard to get into a job in the computer games business, some people have it forced upon them and some just walk into it as though it was carved in the stars. Talking to James Hawkins, project manager on MicroProse's *Special Forces*, it quickly becomes clear that he fits into that latter category.

Nineteen-year-old Hawkins knew that he wanted a job in games almost from the moment that he first prodded the rubber keys on his Spectrum, so when a position as a games tester was advertised in his local newspaper he just had to apply.

"I knew that I definitely wanted a job in producing computer games," he explains, "but as there's no real qualification system for people who work in this business, I decided to take the job as a games tester and work my way up from there."

Of course, it did help that one of the UK's largest software publishers is based in his own sleepy home town of Tetbury in Gloucestershire, but something tells you that Hawkins would probably have succeeded in his ambition even without this coincidence. Having cut his teeth in the testing department with a number of big games, including the coin-op conversion *Xenophobe* and Mike Singleton's strategy opus *Midwinter*, Hawkins got his chance to move upwards when he was appointed assistant project manager on *UMS II*. He then worked on *Flames Of Freedom* in the same position, before being offered the chance to take the reins with the current 'follow-up' to *Airborne Ranger*, Special Forces.

Although he had enjoyed working on his previous projects, this one really interested him. "I always had an idea that we could take a game with an arcade type view and put just enough strategy into it, while keeping it arcadey in the easier levels," he says, "and to actually see that work out was quite satisfying."

Hawkins was also happy because this game gave him a chance to get away from the "heavy strategy" which he was fast beginning to specialise in.

So what exactly does a project manager at MicroProse do? "Well, it's down to us to make sure that the project progresses from day to day. This involves talking to the programmers, keeping an eye on the playability and attending regular meetings with what's called the 'quality assurance team', which basically consists of the designer, the testers, the project manager and whoever's doing the documentation," he says. "In simple terms, we take the game from being just an idea or design to the finished product that you see in the shops."

SOFTOGRAPHY

(as assistant project manager)

- ***UMS II***
- ***Flames Of Freedom***

(as project manager)

- ***Special Forces***

One of the biggest problems he faces is the legendary 'slippage' which is the scourge of all games developers (this is really just a fancy term for the fact that programmers can never seem to get anything done on time). "It's really weird that," he says, "the programmers often get something done really quickly and then take ages to get something else sorted out – although in general, we're never really far off our deadlines."

So has he ever thought about programming himself? "I've done a little bit of 68000 stuff," he admits, "but I haven't really had the chance to get into it big-time since I started this job, although I would like to."

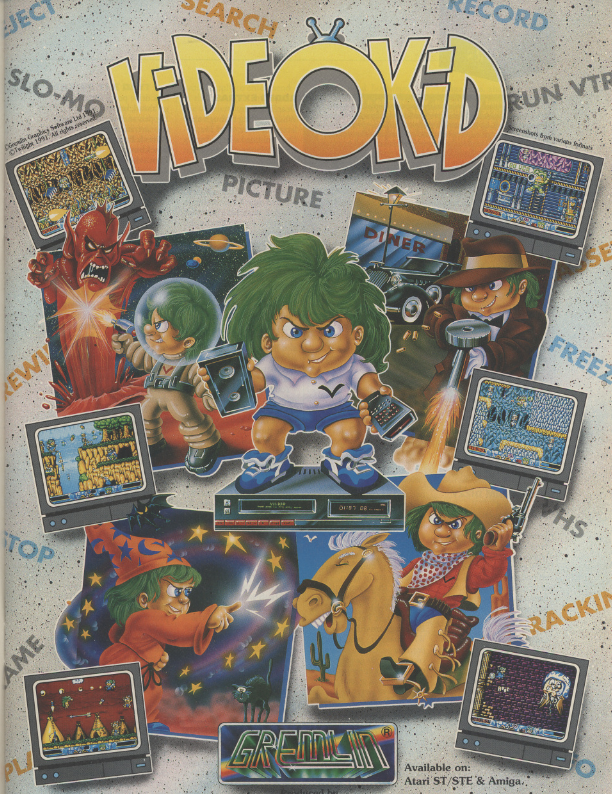
12:36
27
349
5

When it comes to playing games, Hawkins names two 8-bit classics, *Wizball* and *Hydrofool*, as his all-time favourites, while MicroProse's *Gunship* also merits an honourable mention. When he's not playing games, he spends his time burning the midnight oil at local raves.

With Special Forces now out of his hands, Hawkins has definite ideas about what he'd like to try next: "I'd like to try my hand at producing a simulation, but with a more comprehensive front end that we've done in the past. But I'm not really bothered what the subject is, I just enjoy making things happen."

Ciarán Brennan

- *Special Forces is reviewed on page 46*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VIDEOKID
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GREMLIN

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TWILIGHT

Another blockbuster video bursts onto your screen and you're thinking to yourself, what can that guy do that I can't?.The room spins, you feel invincible and .... CRASH!...

...You're battling with an evil wizard in a far off medieval world, you have but one mission to travel through 5 time spheres and 20 battle planes out of your video!.....

Gremlin Graphics Software Ltd., Carver House., 2-4 Carver Street, Sheffield S1 4FS. Tel: (0742) 753423.

Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to a fabulous February here at The One for Amiga Games. We're feeling so good about this month (especially as it has an extra day tacked on at the end) that we're going to let you fill the next three pages yourself. Go on... they're all yours.

PRIZE LETTER

WHY ALL THE HAND ME DOWNS?

Dear The One,

Why is it, when we have a machine as good as the Amiga, that we have to put up with versions of games converted from machines with less impressive hardware?

What am I talking about? Well, what about *Heart Of China* (which is obviously a converted PC game), *The Secret Of Monkey Island* (ditto) and the forthcoming *John Madden American Football* (which Electronic Arts is bringing over from a Mega Drive original).

It's fair enough that we're going to actually see these games I suppose, but from what I know there are more than half a million Amigas in Britain alone – so why can't the developers and programmers write games specifically to cater for them?

It really annoys me that, having spent nearly £400 on a machine just to play games on, I end up having to play poor, jerky and graphically unimpressive games which don't take advantage of the computer which I saved so long and hard for.

Stewart Knowles,
Letchworth,
Herts

Good point Stewart. In fact there are more than 700,000 Amigas out there, so you've obviously got a strong case. The trouble is that it's too easy for a lot of publishers to simply copy games from other formats. Once again, it's up to you to vote with your pocket.

MAKING HIM DIZZY

Dear The One,

I have a few questions to ask you concerning Code Masters' amazing little egg.

Firstly, why are Amiga owners only given a few Dizzy games to choose from and not the full range? Even the original is not available!

Secondly, I recently saw *The Dizzy Collection* which includes *Treasure Island Dizzy*, *Fantasy World Dizzy*, *Magicland Dizzy*, *Fast Food Dizzy* and *Kwik Snax* all for £25. I have all of these except Magicland Dizzy, which I was told could not be bought separately. Is this true? Are the Code Masters crew trying to rip us all off?

Finally, are there any plans to bring out *Spellbound Dizzy*, which has 105 rooms? And what about *Prince Of The Yolkfolk* (or something like that)? If not, then I am seriously considering using my Spectrum for playing all the Dizzy games not released on the Amiga.

Come on Code Masters, give Dizzy games a new lease of life on the Amiga and use its graphics capabilities to sell the game.

I hope you can answer some of my questions so I can sleep safely again, knowing that there will be more Dizzy games to come.

Daniel Webb,
Chalfont St Peter,
Buckinghamshire

Well Daniel, it's nice to be the bearer of good news, so here goes… all of the games you've mentioned are either currently in development, or have just been released – even the original Dizzy game! See the news pages if you want more details. By the way, it's not really fair to suggest that the Masters might be ripping you off just because of the appearance of previously unreleased games on compilation. After all, this sort of thing is standard practice in the music business, isn't it?

ADDED EXTRAS

Dear The One,

Whilst reading through the letters in Issue 40 of *The One*, I noticed a letter by Adam Whisker from Herts, who wrote about being disappointed by the empty packaging of *Lotus Turbo Challenge 2*. He quite rightly pointed out that Gremlin could have included a poster or maybe a demo disk with the game.

Well, recently I bought *Knights Of The Sky* by MicroProse. It's got a large instruction book, a map of Flanders during World War 1 and two game disks.

What I think is a good idea (which other software companies should follow), is that Knights Of The Sky also has an extra disk with it advertising MicroProse software that is out now or due out soon.

You can keep this disk or reformat it and use it for game saves. What do other people think about this, and what about software companies offering us value for money?

J.C. Perry,
Chellaston,
Derby

Fair enough, and while we're on this subject…

MORE EXTRAS

Dear The One,

I agree with Adam Whisker about the lack of posters in computer games. Recently I bought *PitFighter* and *Super Space Invaders*: I thought that both would have included posters, but to my surprise both only had the games and the instructions.

Robert Mercer,
Huntingdon,
Cambs

Listen up publishers, us game players are going to start making our decisions based on what's filling the box. You have been warned!

THE CARTRIDGE FAMILY?

Dear The One,

My friends and I are writing to enquire whether the Amiga will be converted to a console – and will the cartridge drive go into the disk drive port? If this does go ahead, when will it happen and how much will the cartridges cost?

Pritesh Pandya,
Blackburn,
Lancashire

Although there have been rumours about an Amiga console knocking about for well over a year now, Commodore is remaining tight-lipped as to when (or even if) this will happen. Watch our news pages carefully over the next few months and we'll let you know what comes up.

GREEDY GIT

Dear The One,

When you started your sneak preview demo disks I liked them very much. Now though, when my friends get their copies of *The One for Amiga Games*, they just play the demo once and then blank the disk.

Couldn't you have better demo disks?

Sam Stephen,
Stafford,
Staffordshire

What do you mean better demo disks? The nerve! Check out our disks compared with the opposition's and we think you'll be pleasantly surprised: over the past three issues we've brought you RoboCop 3, Double Dragon III, MicroProse Golf and many more. What more could you want?

SAVING GRACE

Dear The One,

To save games you usually have to have a formatted disk ready while you're playing, but I have a bit of a problem with this.

I have tried using the 'initialise' command from the Workbench, but when I do this and then try to save *Populous II* onto the blank disk it says 'disk error'.

What's going on? If you can't help me, I'll never have a meaningful relationship with Populous II!

M. Radford,
Rugeley,
Staffs

We're at a bit of a loss about this one, as it seems as though you're doing everything right so far. Does anyone out there have any ideas?

SAVING THE DAY?

Dear The One,
To fight piracy, why don't games that can be saved come with a special disk that only that game can be saved to? It would be more expensive, but it would save software publishers millions.

Ross Jackson,
Storrington,
West Sussex

No doubt the hackers would only find a way around this protection too. The only way that piracy will ever be stopped is if games players everywhere give up using pirated software. It's as simple as that!

NOTHING FOR COMING FIRST

Dear The One,
On September 4th I purchased a CDTV, as I wanted to be one of the first people to use an excellent idea. It was difficult at first because of the lack of available software, but nowadays this is becoming more readily available.

However, I am still upset on two points. Firstly, when I purchased the machine I returned a card which promised that I would receive update details and so on. I have never received any acknowledgement or information. Secondly, I read that they are reducing the cost of the CDTV by £100. Again it appears that us pioneers have to suffer the most expense for the least benefit.

Where is Commodore's sense of fair play? People who bought the machine in its early days should receive something for helping to get the idea off the ground.

Stephen Lewis,
Ilford,
Essex

This, it seems, is the price you pay for being a pioneer. It's a bad show that Commodore hasn't kept you up to date like it promised though – we'll look into that on your behalf.

ONE SHOT WONDER

Dear The One,
Before reading your last issue, I thought a *MicroProse Golf* competition would be a great idea to replace the *Kick Off* compo. The same idea would apply to enter; send in the best three shots and the winners would play a round to find the best golfer.

I have been playing the game for hours and have managed to produce a hole-in-one from 170 yards... honest! When you score a hole in one, a screen loads up of a man with his arm up every time you replay the shot. Am I the only one who has achieved this?

Anyhow, back to the point. When you finish the *Jimmy White's Whirlwind Snooker* challenge, you should give this idea some thought as it could be a great success (and I would be the first to enter).

Wingchee Man,
Aveley,
Essex

Anyone else interested out there? If enough of you send your shots in, then how can we refuse?

CRY FOR COMPILATIONS

Dear The One,
Your letter from George O'Connor requesting more info on compilations struck a chord. I generally buy compilations rather than new games, mainly because they're good value.

A special compilation review section would be quite useful, but instead of a full-blown feature why not publish your ratings for the individual games, along with a brief description of each one (i.e. whether it is a shoot 'em up, strategy, flight sim)? You could also compile an overall index from these individual scores. This would provide useful information to prospective buyers and would save you reviewing time and effort.

Richard Kupisz,
Luton,
Bedfordshire

Not a bad idea Richard, we'll see what we can do.

BOXING CLEVER

Dear The One,
Do you remember the days when computer games were packaged in small boxes? Most new games which have been released are now in boxes the size of a person's head. *Lemmings*, *Midwinter II*, *Robocod* – the list is almost endless.

Personally, I wouldn't mind having smaller and less superbly presented packaging – not only would it be less of a storage inconvenience, but it might be cheaper as well.

P. Durani,
Romford,
Essex

A WORD TO THE WISE

Dear The One,
I've recently noticed that many critically unsuccessful games (for example, *Terminator 2* and *Final Fight*) have made it to top positions in most of the computer magazines' charts. Why is this?

Surely games such as *Leander*, *Populous 2* and others of that standard should be taking the top positions.

Don't these people ever read reviews about games? Do they just walk into a shop and buy a game with a big name? I read a lot of magazines, and only when a game receives good reviews from most of them will I go out and buy it.

When will the rest of the world's gamers wake up?

Ikfan Ahmad,
Wembley,
Middlesex

BETTER EARLY

Dear The One,
Regarding the letter from Simon Thorpe (Issue 39) about his complaining that reviews are published too early. I believe that Simon is wrong, the main attraction of *The One* is that its comprehensive and concise software reviews are usually published at least one month earlier than the competition's.

An early review allows us game freaks to save our pennies for that particular game which attracts our attention. I personally don't want to read about the failure of a game after I have bought it.

If Simon would read the reviews published, he would

ALL I WANTED FOR CHRISTMAS

Dear The One,
On reading S. Jolly's letter (Issue 39), I thought that it would be good if I wrote out a Top Ten list, if only to make it look like you get some feedback from your letters page. So, here in glorious techniwords (or something) it is...

The Top Ten games that my granny was going to buy me for Christmas (and the reasons why she didn't):

1) **Alien Storm**
   (Her pension wouldn't take it)
2) **Wacky Races**
   (She got the name wrong and asked for mucky faces)
3) **Robocod**
   (She went into a toy shop and asked for an electronic fish)
4) **Double Dragon III**
   (She had given up by this time and bought Supercars)
5) **CJ's Elephant Antics**
   (She suggested this, but I reminded her that a) she already had my pressie, and b) she bought it for my birthday)
6) **Helter Skelter**
   (It's been deleted for years now, and besides... it's crap!)
7) **Geisha**
   ("It's a bit rude," she said, but who cares? It's even worse than Helter Skelter)
8) **Populous II**
   (It wasn't out yet)
9) **2 Hot 2 Handle (compilation)**
   (She went hunting for it, but couldn't find it anywhere)
10) **Dragonninja**
   (Basically, it's very, very rubbish)

Paul Jones,
Isleworth,
Middlesex

And there you have it. Any other readers got a silly chart that we should know about? We're all ears...

SERGEANT SOFTWARE

When you're short on software and down on your luck, there's only one man that can help... or can he?

YES, I USED TO WATCH THE YOUNG ONES...

Dear Fascist Bullyboy,
Give me some more games, you bast**d. May the seed of your loins be fruitful in the belly of your women.

Peter Laffrunchi,
Dover,
Kent

Sorry old boy, but I haven't got a clue as to what you're on about.

THE DIRECT APPROACH

Dear Sarge,
I want a game, so please give me one.

Robert Mercer,
Needingworth,
Hants

Didn't we have a letter just like that only a couple of issues back? Sorry Bob (you don't mind if I call you Bob, do you?), but there's nothing in this game for two in a bed.

SICK HUMOUR

Dear Sarge,
Something terrible has happened to me (cough!). One normal day not long ago, I was playing my (splutter!) computer when ... it struck (wheeze!). That's right, you've guessed it! I've got a computer virus.

I read somewhere that the only cure for someone in my predicament is (cough! hack!) a new game. What's more, it's said that if your name is Michael, you should receive a game with the words 'League' and 'Top' in it. Coincidentally, there's a new compilation out called *The Top League*.

How about it?

Michael Irvine,
Glenrothes,
Fife

I've heard some of that stuff too. For example the Sarge should only fall for a pathetic attempt to pick up some free software if his first name is Quentin – and do you really think that a butch, hard soldier like me would have a noncey name like that? Anyhow, don't waste too much time hanging around your letterbox.

● *And finally, before I forget, I've been meaning to have a few words with some of you about the standard of your letters. Firstly, to that twit Derek Dempsey from Walkinstown in Dublin, who sent me a threatening letter made up of letters cut out from newspapers so that I wouldn't be able to trace him – why did you put your name on the bottom? Also, Miss Amanda Woolgar, your offer was extremely nice, but this is a family magazine so I couldn't possibly print it (and besides, I'm married to my work).*

notice that a release date is clearly shown. This would save him moaning about not finding a particular game at his local shop.

Ignore Simon! Keep up the good work.

Marc Callaghan,
Kirkintilloch,
Glasgow

TAGGING ALONG

Dear The One,
I am a great follower of your magazine and have been since Issue 23. In your last issue you had a digitised picture of the WWF tag team, Luke and Butch (the Bushwhackers).

I was wondering if you could tell me where you got this from, as *WWF Wrestlemania* is a 'singles only' tournament. And will there be a tag team version released soon?

Tony Hayes,
Ayr,
Strathclyde

The tag team picture came from a very old WWF slideshow demo – and as far as we know, there are no plans for a tag team version of the game.

NO JOY

Dear The One,
The first joystick I bought was a Quickshot Turbo, however this only lasted about three months, as its fire buttons stopped working and the left movement spring snapped.

Next I tried a Quickshot Turbo II, which also broke soon after I started to use it. So I decided to try a different controller, the Flightgrip 1, and although this still works, I find it very awkward (especially in stick wagglers).

Anyway I now have a Zipstick Super Pro (which I got for Christmas). I hope it lasts forever, but it probably won't.

P.M. Dagg,
Misterton,
South Yorkshire

TRACKING DOWN

Dear Sir,
In the November issue you published a competition to win a copy of *The Official Guide To Sid Meier's Railroad Tycoon* by Russell Snipe.

Could you possibly give me any information as to where I may be able to obtain this book. as I have tried various bookshops.

J. M. Lane (Mrs.),
Greenhithe,
Kent

You're a regular J.R. Hartley, aren't you? Anyhow, have you tried any import bookshops (the book's published by Compute books)? If that doesn't work, you could try calling MicroProse on (0666) 504326 – you never know, the folks there could help.

DISK-USSION

Dear Sir/Madam/Brian,
I'll get straight to the point... the cover disks.

First of all, let me make it clear that I am in no way dissatisfied with the quality of the demos on your cover disks. There are ups and downs of course, but every so often a demo comes along on your disk that has me foaming at the mouth, jumping up and down and shouting "Scew, what a porcher!" or words to that effect. Take, for example, the fabulous *MicroProse Golf*, which I bought as a result of playing your demo.

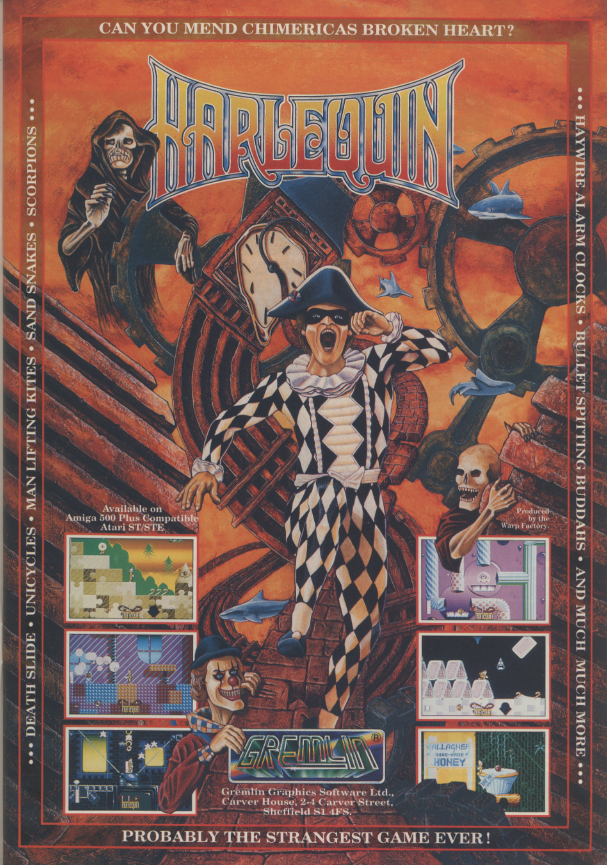
However, I feel that the cover disks lack one thing: depth. I'm not suggesting that the cover disks should be filled with boring utilities and the like, however, I am suggesting that there should be PD games, PD demos, clip art, a gallery and so on.

You would make at least one reader very happy.

Chris Pritchett,
Degonwy,
Gwynedd

As you can see from this month's disk, we've already started.

Why not send your spleen to us here at The One, EMAP Images, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU (Sergeant Software letters should be clearly marked as such). The Letter Of The Month will now earn its author a T-shirt and a game of his or her choice, so don't forget to let us know which one you want. All correspondence should be confined to one side of the paper and, where possible, to a single sheet. The editor reserves the right to edit any letters as he sees fit. Please do not include an S.A.E. as, due to the volume of mail received, we are unable to make individual replies.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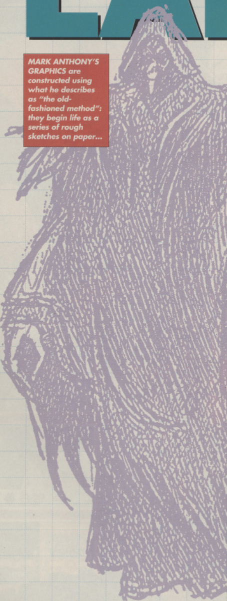
Teque is taking a break from coin-op conversions to produce its first role-playing game. Gordon Houghton sheds some light on the *Shadowlands.*

SHADOW LANDS



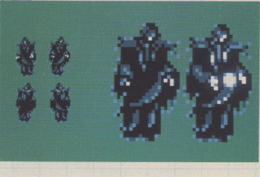
MARK ANTHONY'S GRAPHICS are constructed using what he describes as "the old-fashioned method": they begin life as a series of rough sketches on paper...

AFTER A STREAM of successful coin-op conversions, Teque was looking for a new challenge. "RPGs are very popular at the moment," explains Dean Lester, project leader and game designer, " We'd all played and enjoyed *Dungeon Master* and we were looking forward to a really long project as well. We'd only had about six months on a lot of our previous work, particularly the coin-op conversions, and we felt that a 12-month project would really show what we could achieve. That's why American and Japanese games do so well: they have a huge development team and they sit on a game until it's absolutely right."

Because of Dungeon Master's impact on the 16-bit scene, Lester sees RPGs as an increasingly important element of the games market in the future: "Expectations are getting higher as standards improve, and the best way to fulfil those expectations is with a complex mouse-driven strategy game, not just another shoot 'em up."

As some concession to arcade fans, Teque has opted for an arcade-style isometric 3D view and kept the controls and information simple. Lester is convinced that if a game system is relatively familiar to games-players, it has more chance of success: he cites the case of *Interphase*, which, despite plenty of rave reviews, didn't sell as well as it might have done because the concept was too unusual.

...which are then converted into 16-colour graphics (below). Some monsters – such as the Lyncher – are unique to specific levels, but there are plenty of others (such as skeletons) which you'll find everywhere. These graphics are one of the last pieces of the jigsaw: all the code has been finished and much of the design is complete, so once Anthony is satisfied with his creations, the game will be sent to Domark for playtesting.



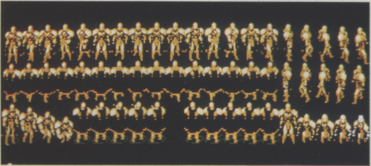
PROJECT: Shadowlands

PUBLISHER: Domark

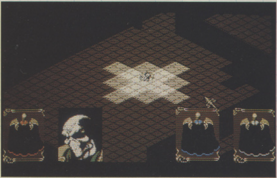
AUTHOR: Teque:
Barry Costas (Programming)
Mark Anthony (Graphics)
Matt Furniss (Sound)
Dean Lester (Design)

INITIATED: November 1990

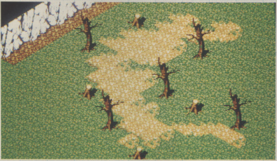
RELEASE: March 1992



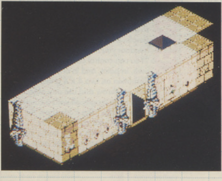
***BECAUSE THE MAIN CHARACTERS** move in three dimensions, they need 128 animation frames. This means that you get five versions of walking, activating switches, crouching, fighting, dying, picking up objects, casting magic, drinking and eating. Memory is saved by using the same animations for each of the four characters and simply changing the colour.*



***SHADOWLANDS HAS MORE WEAPONS** than you can shake a stick at, including different types of sword, daggers, clubs, bows and arrows, hammers, axes and (of course) sticks. They aren't the only objects in the game: you'll also find shields, scrolls, books, torches, coins, levers, locks, apples and 16 different types of key.*



***THIS IS A** rough version of the first level. More trees, paths and enemies are planned, and there may be a hidden cheat mode which allows you to warp to later levels.*

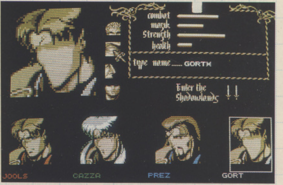


***IF YOU OWN** a 512K machine, levels will be loaded in separately; 1Mb machines will use the extra memory as a RAM disk and save on loading time.*

THAT'S MAGIC

SHADOWLANDS' MAGIC is governed by the laws of the mysterious 'force', a *Star Wars*-like energy field that flows through walls and objects and allows you to cast spells. Every character has a force level which is drained whenever he creates a spell, but you can transfer power from certain objects to enhance your own magical skills. For example, a light spell will eventually run down, but you can extract the magical power from an axe and transfer it to recharge the spell. In effect, this means that there are very few 'useless' objects in the game – unlike *Dungeon Master*, where you could weigh yourself down with weedy swords and rocks.

The proposed spell system is equally ingenious. As you'd expect, there are plenty of individual parchments lying around which allow you to create goodies such as fireballs, waterballs, healing, strength and magic mines. In addition, you will have spell books which will feature six slots into which you can place parchments in any order you choose, to create whole sequences of half a dozen spells. Just by using a spell book you could cast 'freeze life' on a monster, followed by a poison cloud and a fireball, and then heal any injured members of your party. As well as books and scrolls there are plenty of other magical objects around, such as altars of rebirth (to resurrect your dead), magic fountains and teleports.



***ANTHONY'S PASSION** for Japanese-style graphics led to this character portrait generator. You can customise your heroes with eight different types of hair, eyes, nose and mouth, allowing up to 1,500 unique faces. You can also name them and assign semi-random statistics in the categories of Combat, Magik, Strength and Health.*

PROJECT: Shadowlands

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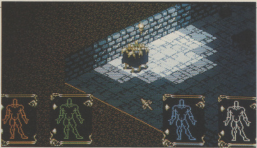
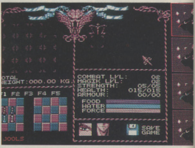


ONE OF THE FIRST things you'll notice is the use of burst scrolling. Lester explains: "A burst scrolling isometric game is rare: flick-screen RPGs tend to be room-based and lose integrity; and it would be unplayable if the screen scrolled every time a character moved."

THIS IS THE inventory screen: you can examine all four characters, select a leader and manipulate up to 64 objects. The chess boards at the bottom allow you to define your squad formation – there are points in the game when this is vital.



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JOOLS

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MAGIK LVL: 02
STRENGTH: 05/05
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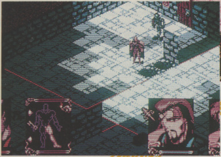
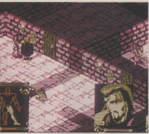
ARMOUR: 00/00
FOOD
WATER
FORCE

PITS CAN LEAD to new levels or certain death, but they're not the only natural obstacles you'll face. Lester is considering incorporating poisoned food, although he does have his reservations: "there's nothing more annoying than searching for something for ages, and then eating it only to find it kills you. We've tried as far as possible to take out all the frustration."





SHADOWLANDS boasts 20 types of monster, including a minotaur, snakes and rats, mummies and a dragon lord. You can defeat them with weapons, magic, or team strategy.

As a result, Shadowlands is a compromise between *Gauntlet*'s arcade elements and Dungeon Master's depth. "There are lots of things we liked about Dungeon Master, but we wanted to do it differently. So we divided the game into components, such as the view, lighting, fighting and control system, and we tried to combine some of the breakthroughs they made with our own input."

As for the scenario, no one is making any claims to originality. As a boy, you lived in a village called Eternity which bordered a range of hills known as the Shadowlands. One day, your humble hamlet was razed, everyone was axed to death, and you fled into a nearby river. Unfortunately, the evil ghoulies caught and killed you, too; but the river you died in was magical, and your disembodied spirit survived. For reasons best known to themselves, the baddies nicked all the corpses and took them home, and the only way you can resurrect the villagers and yourself is by hijacking four passing strangers and using them to find all the missing bodies.

So the quest begins – all 14 levels of it. As well as the more traditional Dungeons (there will probably be six), there's also an outside world, a Temple, Prison, Egyptian tomb and a Hampton Court-style maze, all of which are infested with monsters. Lester doesn't think it's the scale of the game that will prove difficult, but "the combination of puzzles, monsters, traps and loads of objects to find and use. We reckon that if players want to discover everything they'll have to spend an average of six to seven hours on every level."

Part of this time will be taken up with exploration: "There'll be several different ways to complete each stage, allowing you to progress in a random fashion – if the structure was too linear it would ruin the fun." Compensation will be made for your skill level, too: "The program senses how good you are: if you're particularly adept at some puzzles you might find there are a couple of extra monsters."

Probably the toughest programming decision was specifying when walls should appear and disappear: "The problem with scrolling an isometric game is that you want to leave in the background walls so that you can feature switches and objects, but you want to leave out the foreground walls so you can see your characters. Flick-screen games solve this by just putting in an archway and omitting the wall – but in Shadowlands, once one of the characters walks round the other side of a wall it should reappear. The compromise we reached makes the foreground walls disappear when your character is near, and indicates them with a red line. It looks weird but plays perfectly naturally."

When Shadowlands is complete, Teque is returning to arcade games. Current projects include a conversion of a soccer coin-op to coincide with the European Championships and, for the Olympics, a multi-event track and field game which promises a unique style of presentation. Watch this space...

THE LIGHT FANTASTIC

APPROPRIATELY ENOUGH, light and shadow play a vital role in *Shadowlands*. It's not just a question of creating a gloomy atmosphere, as Lester observes: "Light is more than a graphical effect, it also allows you to use objects like photo receptors to activate switches or open doors. Some monsters, too, are attracted to light, so that you can create decoys – others are repelled by it." The major light sources are provided by torches and magic spells, but both are extinguished quickly so you need to keep a constant lookout for new supplies. "The beauty of the limited vision system we're using is that you often just get vague glimpses of objects lying around, particularly when your light source is fading: you see silhouettes of coins, but you can't be sure you've found everything until you've searched everywhere."

UNDER CONTROL

TO BALANCE THE COMPLEXITY of RPG with the simplicity of an arcade game, Teque has created a unique control system. Everything has been reduced to four icons, an inventory screen and the playing area. "It's simple, but it gives you all the freedom you need," comments Lester. "You can control characters on their own, in pairs, and in any user-defined formation on two 4 x 4 grids. You can pick up, throw and use any object, and create magic, all with a couple of mouse clicks." The icons show the outlines of your characters: by highlighting parts of the body, you can make them eat, walk on their own, lead the party, fight, read and so on.

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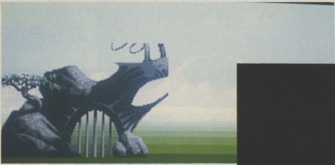
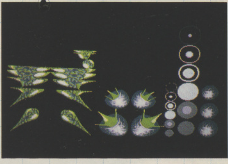
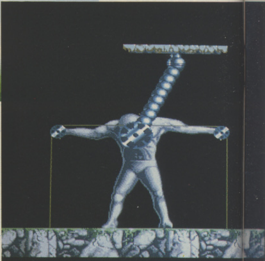
As we continue our walk in the shadows, Kati Hamza takes a look at the third part of Psygnosis' monstrous saga.



EDMONSON CREATES *background mock-ups like these in DPaint IV before they're implemented in the game. This tests the colour and contrast between the foreground and background in advance.*





ABOVE LEFT: *This forest flower, like every other adversary in the game, has been designed exclusively. The new monsters will have one thing in common with their predecessors though, and that's size – some are up to three quarters the height of the screen and one is even larger than that.*

ABOVE: *Many of the successful traps and puzzles familiar to fans of Beast II should be making their reappearance in the sequel. In addition to this fiendish bending platform, watch out for mechanical systems with conveyor belts, swinging arms, pulleys and levers.*

SHADOW OF

WHEN THE ORIGINAL *Shadow Of The Beast* hit the shops in 1989, it took the games world by storm. Technically, it was unsurpassed: it had more than 10 layers of parallax scrolling, sprites bigger than anything ever seen before and some of the most attractive melt-in-the-mouth backdrops anywhere: there was even a free Roger Dean T-shirt in the box. According to the critics, there was only one thing missing: although it looked good enough to eat, there just wasn't enough gameplay.

Its creators are the first to agree. "We couldn't get away with it now," explains graphic impresario Martin Edmondson. "It was definitely a case of being in the right place at the right time. Apart from how many colours and layers of parallax and monsters we could squeeze on screen, no thought went into it whatsoever." Today's customer, he feels, is definitely more discerning. "I'd love to rattle off a game in five months, but unless you come up with some really playable, addictive idea like Lemmings, you can't do that any more."

The upshot of this is that, while the game will retain the characteristic look and feel of the original, Edmonson and team-mate Paul Howarth have made several significant changes. "Beast I was a graphics showcase and some people found Beast II too difficult," says Edmonson. "In Beast III our aims are to keep it looking good, retain the puzzles of Beast II and make it easier. It's going to be much more accessible."

Instead of one giant world, the new game consists of a series of self-contained levels, each with its own soundtrack, graphics and monsters. The game structure isn't linear: you get to choose where you go and where you start. This has advantages for the programmer as well as the player, as Edmonson explains: "It means that people can immediately see loads of different graphics, rather than having to wander through specific areas first. For me it's also much easier to start off drawing a forest than to gradually create a forest environment you can walk into."

Newcastle-based Edmonson and Haworth, who both abandoned their computer science degrees in favour of a professional games writing career, have clear ideas of what a good action game should be like: "The most important thing is the feel. If the game is very bulky to control, things stick when they hit walls and the collision detection is a bit naff, it's very annoying to play, no matter how addictive the gameplay might be. The whole thing should run very smoothly and be easy to pick up and move around." As you'd expect from a programming team that has built its reputation on breath-taking visuals, they put very strong emphasis on the overall appearance. "You can have an excellent game but if it looks really, really bad it's not going to sell

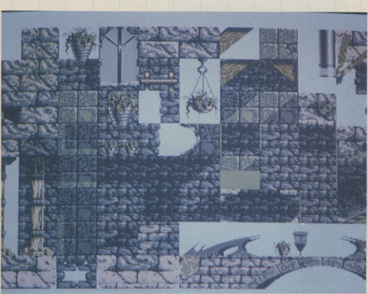
PROJECT: Shadow of The Beast III

PUBLISHER: Psygnosis

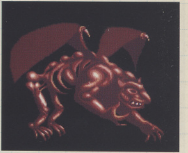
AUTHOR: Reflections:
Martin Edmondson (Graphics)
Paul Howarth (Coding)
Tim Wright (Sound)

INITIATED: October 1990

RELEASE: Summer 1992



***CREATING A SERIES** of separate levels has given Edmonson much more scope for graphical variety. "In Beast I, the graphics didn't change that much, except when you entered something like a tavern." In Beast III there's a distinct difference between these castle graphics and, for example, the forest. The most basic map components are 32 by 32 pixel blocks, like these.*



***A GIANT ENEMY** awaits at the climax of most levels. Despite his obvious predilection for spectacular graphics, Edmondson refuses to divulge the exact number of colours. "If I say it's not as many as the original Beast, some people might say that it looks like we've taken a step backwards, but the fact is, things have changed. Instead of stressing numbers we're concentrating on more important things."*

because you've got a problem with screenshots. They're not going to attract anybody so no-one's going to buy the game."

This opinion is reflected right through the development process, starting with design. Forget the game structure: looks always come first. "First of all, we say what we want the background to look like – whether we need a hazy skyscape, mountains, icebergs in the middle of the sea or whatever – and then we concentrate on the lighting effect." At this stage they decide on the game speed, discuss the scrolling, how the main character will function and what they'd prefer the controls to feel like. "Then we try and wind a game around these ideas if we can."

The coding itself is carried out on a 25Mhz PC running PDS 2. "We must be the only people left who don't use *SNASM* – we just find it too slow," claims Edmonson. The current vogue for creating specially designed editors and utilities is something he personally considers a waste of time. "I know that a lot of people write very complicated map designers and editors, but I can't see the point in justifying spending three months writing something like that – it's not going to save you three months. We use the most basic tools we possibly can, so we just get stuck into the game and work exclusively on that."

None of the data from the first two games is being re-used. "It's probably slower to mess around with original code," explains Edmonson, "than to write it again. On top of that there's the problem that the original code for Beast I was so bad. It was the first thing we really did seriously and when you look back on it, it's very slow and inefficient and could have been done 10 times better. We always like to start from scratch."

Inevitably, one of the most difficult aspects so far has been to get the famous parallax scrolling sorted out. "In Beast I, we chose the most obvious and the easiest way of doing it, but the problem with that was that you couldn't have monsters running over the foreground at the same time. They had to be very spaced out and nowhere near interesting parts of the map." For Beast II, Martin and Paul came up with a different solution. "We fixed it so that we could have monsters around ladders and bits of buildings, but the background suffered and was basically just a silhouette."

Third time around, neither monsters nor backgrounds should be neglected. "We've managed to free a whole playfield for monsters. Unfortunately this solution is very processor intensive so it's taken us months and months just to get it going." It's been doubly difficult because of the need to produce a truly transatlantic game. US Amigas run at 60 Mhz instead of 50 Mhz – so until certain incompatibilities were ironed out, mountains

GRAPHICS

THE GRAPHICS FOR *Shadow of The Beast III* are being developed primarily by Martin Edmondson on an A3000 using DPaint IV, and will be steeped in the characteristic fantasy style of both previous Beast extravaganzas. "It's got very deep parallax scrolling and lots of shades and colours," he explains. In addition to the usual array of palettes and monsters, there'll also be a cinematic intro sequence à la Beast II.

When encouraged to reveal a few juicy statistics, Edmonson stays mum. "I don't think anybody is interested in that kind of stuff any more. When we did Beast I, the whole point was that nobody had done anything like it before so we went all-out for the number of layers of parallax scrolling. But now that we've done that and everybody else has done it as well, there's really no point in saying that we've got 15 layers of parallax and stuff – it just doesn't mean anything." In other words, if you want to know how good it's going to look, you'll just have to wait and see.

F THE BEAST III

PROJECT: Shadow of The Beast III

PUBLISHER: Psygnosis

AUTHOR: Reflections:
Martin Edmondson (Graphics)
Paul Howarth (Coding)
Tim Wright (Sound)

INITIATED: October 1990

RELEASE: Summer 1992

and clouds had a frustrating tendency to collapse on American machines.

It's no accident that all of Reflections' games so far have featured a high degree of technical complexity. Difficulty is what this duo thrives on and they've already got their eyes on bigger and better things. "When we started off years and years ago on the BBC, it was very simple stuff. Things gradually got more involved and now we just want to do more and more complicated things," says Edmonson. "We're both getting bored of the running around, platform type of game – we definitely want to do something more interesting,"he explains

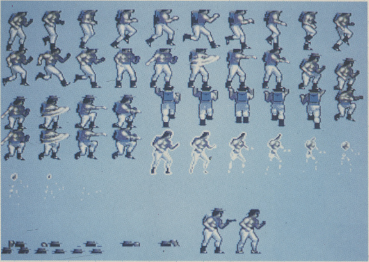
Top of the list is interactive CD. It's not something the twosome is involved in at the moment, but Edmonson is especially keen. "That's what keeps me going – the thought of eventually doing something like that. You can get so much more atmosphere into a CD game."

Meanwhile, they'll have to be content with handling the Lynx conversion of the game, plus a second project, currently too secret to talk about, written in conjunction with Cormat Batstone, co-author of Awesome.

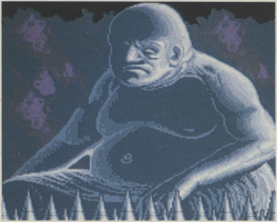
And a *Beast IV*? "No. There definitely won't be one – not unless it's a CD ray-traced version, anyway!"

SOUND

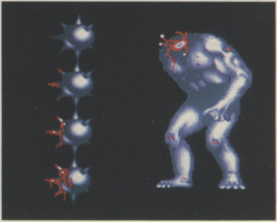
Although each of Reflections' co-founders has a specific area of responsibility, Edmonson is keen to point out that all their work is very much a joint effort. This is one reason why both of them like to be involved in the development of the sound, though in general this is the responsibility of musician Tim Wright. At present there are four major pieces of music, each of which has four distinct sub-themes: add to that plenty of sound effects and you've got sonics which, so far, add up to a massive 800K.



THIS IS THE HERO himself, showing off 12 running frames. The finished version will feature a lavish movie-style intro sequence although the content is still to be decided.



ALL BACKGROUND decorations start out life as free-hand drawings. They're then converted into blocks ready to be slotted into the relevant level map.



THE KEY TO TURNING all these basic components into a stunning game is some incisive technical skill. For Beast III, Reflections is pushing the Amiga's hardware as far as it possibly can. "We use things like horizontal and vertical sprite multiplexing plus horizontal and vertical colour interrupts. It's running absolutely flat out."

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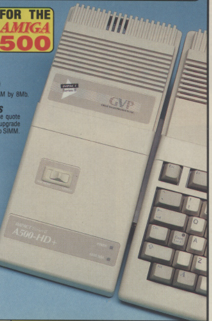

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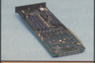

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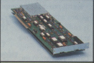

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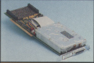

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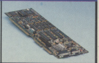

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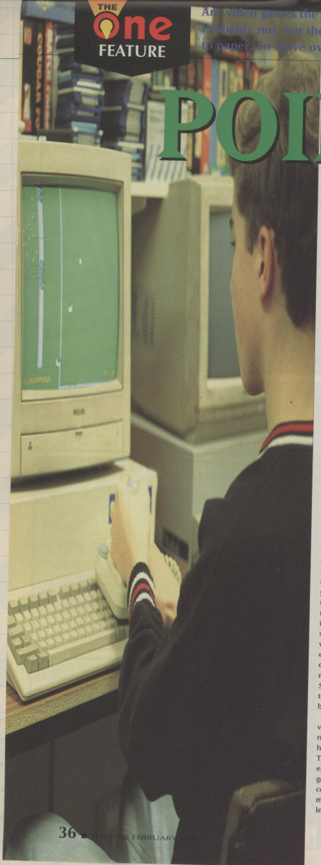

Are video games the beginning of the end of modern civilisation? Probably not, but they're important enough to make you put pen to paper. So move over Anne Robinson, it's time to hear your...

POINTS OF

OUR NEWS PIECE on the publication of a book in the US about video games, *Video Kids* by Professor Eugene Provenzo, provoked quite a strong reaction in our mailbag. So, rather than just print them in the usual letters page, we decided to combine your contributions with the thoughts of a couple of people involved in producing computer games.

CHARLES CECIL
Managing Director, Revolution Software

"This debate is about much more than some obscure book published by Harvard press (and currently unavailable in Britain) – it is crucially important to the credibility and therefore the future of the whole computer games business.

It is the wider public, those who don't read *The One*, who must be convinced if computer and video games are to gain a reputation for providing constructive entertainment.

Firstly, to attack computer games as a whole is to misunderstand the subject. Categorising groups of computer games together, just like categorising groups of people together (racism), is born out of ignorance of the subject. Those who have no experience of computer and video games might categorise *R-Type* and *The Secret Of Monkey Island* together because they know no better.

> ***"It is the people that most vigorously attack the games who need to be convinced of the huge benefits that are available"***
> **Charles Cecil**

It is the people that most vigorously attack the games who need to be convinced of the huge benefits that are available. The potential for education, for example, is highlighted by many games, not least of which was a certain game which was mentioned on last month's letters page: Ian Bird's *Millennium 2.2*. This taught the player a huge amount about our solar system – the author took great care to ensure that all the names and positions of planets and their moons were correct. I unwittingly learned more from playing that game than if I had read an equivalent book, because the learning process was interactive and fun.

Examples such as this convince me that computer and video games have a much wider potential audience. Our aim at Revolution Software is to produce products that will appeal to a wide range of people, regardless of age or sex, because it develops a really good story in an interactive way. Your article in the November issue was very enthusiastic in its reporting of our system, 'Virtual Theatre', and we hope that our efforts will prove worthwhile, but it's the customer who will be the ultimate judge.

When computer and video games are attacked, I think that the real aim of the vitriol is the influence of the arcade-dominated consoles. Consider the parent whose child is addicted to their console. The parent is worried because his or her child devotes many hours playing seemingly mindless games. You can understand their fear that the child is not socialising with other children, not advancing their education, etc. In reality the child is probably playing with a friend (so developing a social relationship), possibly improving hand-to-eye coordination and, more importantly, being stimulated by an interactive pastime.

When the same parents were young, they probably spent hours glued to monotonous television programmes which, if today's programmes are anything to go by, would have

VIEW

been a lot less stimulating than the most mundane of video games. The same criticisms that they have for video games can be levelled at television, but more importantly television is non-interactive and so provides no feedback.

Provided games playing is being substituted for television, then surely it is the better alternative. The argument falls down when games playing eats into time that would otherwise be spent on other pursuits such as playing sport, reading or studying. I believe, therefore, that it is necessary to balance the time devoted to games with all the other pastimes.

For younger children this becomes the responsibility of parents, parents who must not get hysterical through ignorance, but should understand that this new phenomenon is the result of advanced technology and, like other changes, should be viewed positively.

> ***"Video games are capable of producing a vision so strong that there is simply no room for imagination"***
>
> **Stavros Fasoulas**

Computer and video games have a huge contribution to make to modern life in providing a positive influence to the development of a person whether young or old – as long as they are taken, like all things, in moderation."

STAVROS FASOULAS
Freelance Programmer

"A game is a method of using your dexterity in order to improve it. This dexterity can be co-ordinative, strategic, artistic... almost anything you can think of. Everybody plays games of some sort; and they have existed in all cultures for as long as the people themselves.

In the late 70s a new format of entertainment appeared for the first time: video games. Basically it was all about playing a game, for which rules were programmed inside a machine of electronic components. The first ones were pretty simple: one had to control a bouncing ball, trying to break blocks. The ball was just a small light dot on the playscreen and so were the blocks, since the technology was just born, but the concept of games had been there almost forever.

Now over 10 years later, one can easily see that the technology would improve, and it would improve a lot.

Still, just a computer with a screen is always a world uncreated, waiting for its creator, its God. The person to input the lines of command, is the one who breathes life into the computer, he is the one responsible to make the bland screen alive. In a way, every computer in the whole world is a miniature world of its own, every single computer presents an image of a planet somewhere. The programmer can turn this empty, uncreated world into something very beautiful or something very ugly, it's all up to him or her.

Violence is something that is very close to us human beings. Violence is part of us, but it should be regarded as a part of our darker selves and therefore we all have a responsibility to control ourselves, our actions. Violence should never become ordinary, since ordinary violence will be replaced by even greater violence.

Video games are mostly played by kids, therefore it's unforgivably stupid to produce games that mirror the violence of our world in the form of a game, since a game itself can be achieved by any other number of ways without having to transfer the 'dirt' of our world into these miniature worlds which could have stayed 'clean'."

SO MUCH FOR the experts, now here's a selection of what you, the readers, had to say on the subject. Mr. D. Green from London kicks off the debate with the following words of wisdom...

"Violence is a larger part of our lives than many of us would prefer, but we are intrinsically a violent race. This is reflected in such man-made gems as war, crime, television, movies and in our own behaviour.

This can often be attributed to two elements of our composition – environment and games. When the unstable human mind is triggered into action by violence, a scapegoat is needed.

Yes, computer games are violent, often excessively so, but I think Mr. Provenzo ought to spend his time studying and formulating remedies for the more widespread causes of domestic violence: videos, pornography and poverty. I believe the reason why these are not the target of his attack is that they have been discussed at length in the past, and are less likely to generate interest than Video Kids, thus denying the author fame and fortune."

Fair comment, however Derek Richardson of Edinburgh has a few words to say in the professor's defence...

"Virtually every aspect of modern life involves some form of competition, whether it be 22 men out on a field battling for possession of an inflated piece of pigskin, or one person trying to solve the puzzles in a computer game which have been created by the programmer.

What professor Provenzo has chosen to overlook is the fact that most computer games involve logical thought, whether it be trying to remember the attack patterns of the aliens in R-Type or trying to fit in those L-shaped blocks in Tetris. Hand-to-eye co-ordination will be improved by virtually any shoot 'em up, while any quality adventure will encourage attempts to communicate with monsters or people and a capacity for lateral thinking and problem-solving.

Certain games also benefit from player co-operation: the two-player option in *Blood Money* springs readily to mind, as does the two, three or four-player option in *Gauntlet 2*, where co-operation is the key to survival.

Where I find myself agreeing with professor Provenzo is in the areas of racism and sexism. Although many RPGs include black and/or female characters, the number of arcade games I can think of in which one may choose to play a female character is quite small: *Golden Axe, Ant Attack* (on the Spectrum), *Castle Master, Gauntlet* (both 1 and 2), *Bad Company, Mega-lo-Mania* and *Hammerfist*.

Of these, only two give any real benefits for playing a female. In Mega-lo-Mania, if you play one of the three gods, it tends to be Scarlet, the demi-goddess who beats you most often, while in Golden Axe, the Amazon's magic is the most powerful of all. Bad Company actually penalises you for playing a female, as some of the weapons are too heavy for the female characters to carry!

How many times in the intro scenario for a bog-standard horizontally-scrolling beat 'em up are we told that the reason the player has to go and kick his way through several levels of meanies is that his girlfriend has been kidnapped? Almost invariably in these games, a large percentage of the street thugs are black, yet none of the heroes are ever coloured.

It's a good thing that professor Provenzo hasn't come across Bill 'Wardog' Waring from Newtownabbey in Northern Ireland and has this to contribute...

"For the past year and a half (when I got my computer) I have found myself constantly in trouble with the police (for graffitiing phallic symbols - large joysticks with pulsing fire buttons. I treat old folk like Lemmings (giving them umbrellas and pushing them off tall buildings), but I can't seem to get the hang of nuking them all (drat!). I wonder if any other readers have this problem?"

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IT HAPPENED JUST A FEW days ago. On our way back from a high-brow press conference, *The One*'s team just happened to be passing the offices of simulation specialists MicroProse when their staff pounced on us. Brandishing water pistols filled with coloured dye, they took us completely by surprise, squirting us all until we were thoroughly drenched and they run off chanting "one-nil".

Well, we couldn't let such a brazen affront to our good name go unabashed. It seems that MicroProse has declared war on us and we need help. We know that we can rely on you, our loyal readership, to defend our good name, to uphold our honour and to get our own back on those dastardly villains.

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a. Covert Action
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3. During which conflict is *Knights Of The Sky* based?
a. World War I
b. World War II
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1. Entries arriving after February 28th will be ignored.
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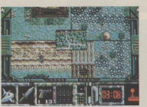
REVIEWS

FEBRUARY 1992

42 **MERCENARY III** (Novagen)



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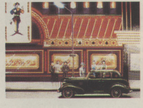

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GRAPHICS

Do the reds go well with the blues or do you just get a purple haze? Quality counts as well as quantity.

DURABILITY

Will it gather dust after a few weeks or will it be in and out of your computer so often it gets dizzy?

SOUND

A test of quality and aptness. Does it suit the mood or do you get brass bands during a funeral?

PLAYABILITY

Does it handle like a Ferrari or a Skoda? Is it a prize marrow or a prize turkey? This is the big one.

OVERALL

All the rest combined and then some. This is the one you should listen to, it means business!

WHAT'S TICKLING THE TEAM

CIARÁN BRENNAN

The ol' Blarney Stone hasn't had much time for games lately, due to the pressures that a top secret project is giving him. What little time he has had left, he's spent playing (and being beaten on) *John Madden American Football*.

PAUL PRESLEY

Paul's been in a bit of a quandry this month. On the one hand he's got *John Madden American Football* to mess around with on the Amiga, on the other he's got *John Madden American Football* to mess around with on the Mega Drive. What's a guy supposed to do, eh?

JOOLS WATSHAM

During one of his numerous trips to Liverpool (and Psygnosis), Jools found himself getting right royally attached to *Agony*. Apart from the owl-based shoot 'em up, he's also been getting down(s) with, you guessed it, *John Madden American Football*.

BRIAN NESBITT

The witless wonder has spent the majority of his time exploring *Mercenary III* (expect a guide soon folks). Hopping in the backs of cabs, marvelling at the accuracy of the planetary bus services, he's barely had time to play around with *John Madden American Football* like the rest of us.

Games come and go, but some live on forever. Paul Woakes is back with the third in the everlasting *Mercenary* series.

MERCENARY III
NOVAGEN

PRICE
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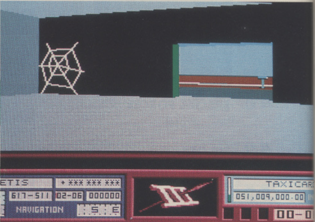
NOW

GRAPHICS	85%
SOUND	80%
DURABILITY	91%
PLAYABILITY	92%
OVERALL	91%

MERCEN

HEROES JUST AREN'T the public figures they used to be. The last time you saw daylight, you'd just saved the entire planet of Eris from colliding with the Damocles comet. Then, due to a 'terrible mistake' you were thrown into prison and locked up for a couple of years. Now, two years later, you're back out and ready to earn another massive fortune.

You receive a letter from your old friend (and ex-president) Margaret, informing you that she's no longer in office and that the forthcoming election only has one candidate, a shady figure by the name of P.C. Bil. His plans for mining projects are a threat to the natural environment and his ultimate aims are more than dubious. Someone needs to stop him, but with a cool 50,000,000 credits in your back pocket, no one says it has to be you.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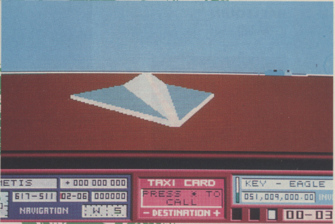
YOU START THE GAME having been recently released from prison. A letter awaits you in the mailbox outside and Benson – your faithful computer aide – informs you of what's happened over the last couple of years.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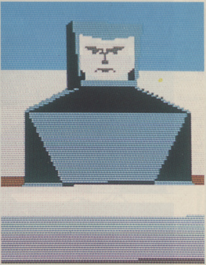
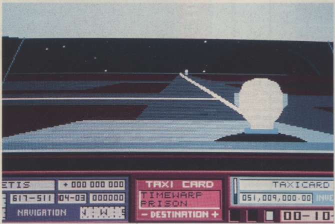
AT THE END of *Damocles* you still had your own personal spacecraft. You've got it in *Mercenary III* too, you just have to remember where you parked it!

E.T.A. BUS SERVICES are available on selected planets and are absolutely free if you own a bus pass. They're pretty reliable too, never getting caught in traffic jams, never arriving three at a time, but usually taking a lengthy route to your destination.

ARY III

P.C. BIL is the villain of the show. Running for presidency, he aims to turn the planet of Dion into a vast mining dump, ruining the environment. Can't have that, can we?





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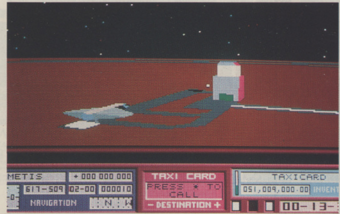
YOUR FIRST TASK is to find a way to get to the spaceport. Throughout the game a number of transportation modes are available to you, from taxis to walking.

COMMERCIAL INTERPLANETARY TRAVEL is possible thanks to KAOS, a chartered space flight company. A regular timetable of departures and arrivals accompanies the game and tells you when you should be at which spaceport.



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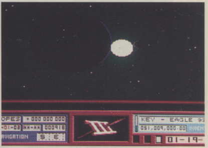

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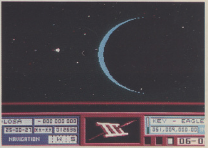

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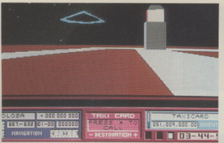
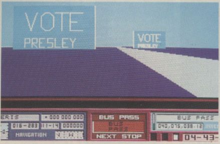
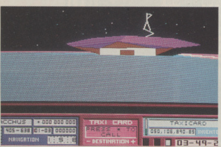
THE GAMMA SOLAR SYSTEM contains nine planets and 19 moons, all of which have strict orbital patterns. At times the view can be somewhat... breathtaking.



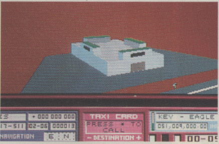
ONE WAY OF LIBERATING Dion is to attack P.C. Bil's fleet head on. Some strategic manoeuvring and hefty firepower are needed though, as Bil's fleet isn't exactly defenceless.



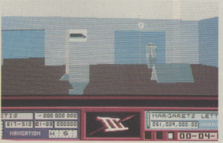
AN ALTOGETHER MORE peaceful approach is to run against Bil in the election. Enrolling in the election register on Vesta is just the first step. A massive media campaign is also needed, with TV and magazine saturation and huge billboard advertising. It all costs money, though.



P.C. Bil isn't the wealthiest of men and a huge win at a few of his casinos might see his empire start to crumble financially. Of course, everyone knows that casinos are rigged. Perhaps you ought to turn the tables.



PERHAPS DIGGING UP the dirt on Bil would work. Hiring a few P.I.s might be handy, as well as doing some snooping of your own. Get the info, present it to the authorities and see him off to a specially-built jail.



ANOTHER ROUTE to success would be to sabotage his mining operations. A judicial use of some plastique could be all it needs to see Bil's equipment go up in smoke and Bil go down in the dumps.

THE WORD

IT'S BEEN OVER two years since we last heard anything of the *Mercenary* saga, but our patience has been rewarded: *Mercenary III* is one of the best 'environment' games to appear for a long time. If you've played either Mercenary or *Damocles* you'll definitely be at an advantage, as a lot of the places, people and events will seem familiar. The most remarkable thing about the game, though, is that even those of you who have never played any of its predecessors will be enthralled by the politics, the intrigue and the action within minutes. Mercenary III generates one of the most believable environments ever experienced in a computer game. Paul Woakes has paid so much attention to detail, from working out bus routes and schedules to encompassing practically every kind of gameplay. You can shoot your way to victory, treating the whole game as a glorified action romp, you can play the saboteur, blowing up strategic targets, you can even jump on the election bandwagon, making yourself a public figure and practically abandon any violence. This is perhaps the nearest thing to virtual reality in the home. It's just a pity that it's offset by the basic control method: you can't look up or down at things, you have to rotate slowly through 180 degrees to turn around, and you can't actually communicate with anyone beyond saying Yes and No. All this and the fact that a fair amount of detail on screen slows things down proves that there's room for improvement in *Mercenary IV* (should such a project exist). A lot of people are also going to be put off by the 'empty' feeling they'll get. There may be other people to interact with in the game, but it could do with more than just the one or two plot carriers. Also, the huge office blocks seem pointless when only one or two floors ever contain anything. Even a few random smatterings of furniture would have livened things up a bit. Anyway, you won't be bothered by these irritants once you've started playing: Mercenary III grabs your attention firmly by its collar and doesn't let go.

Enthralling atmosphere wrapped up in a highly original game

Paul Presley

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Remember *Airborne Ranger*? An original idea that didn't do quite as well as it deserved (that's my opinion anyway). Well, MicroProse has dragged the idea screaming into the 90s.

SPECIAL

SPECIAL FORCES
MICROPROSE

PRICE £34.99

OUT FEBRUARY

GRAPHICS 80%

SOUND 79%

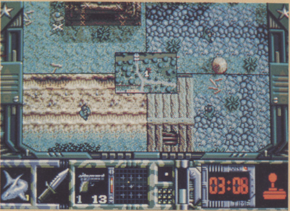
DURABILITY 82%

PLAYABILITY 88%

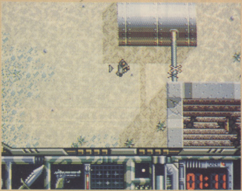
OVERALL 88%

AS THE WORLD GROWS steadily older with every passing day, terrorism, hostile invasions and drug abuse grow with it. To combat the rise in these violent crimes, America has undertaken a top secret operation, the core of which is nestled deep in a top secret military base.

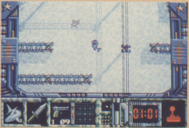
Here eight men train rigorously night and day, seven days a week, preparing to be inserted covertly into a major political hotspot at the drop of a hat. The President wants a job done and they're the men to do it. They're more than Marines, more than Commandos, they are the Special Forces.



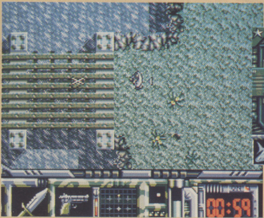
YOUR TEAM of elite soldiers is taken by helicopter to the drop sites and prepares to engage the enemy. Select either stealth or attack mode, their travelling formation and their waypoints and 'lock 'n' load'.



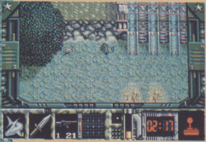
THERE ARE FOUR areas of conflict in the game. In the desert campaigns an armed aggressor has invaded a neighbouring country and your team has been called in to neutralise the enemy's forces before a massive airstrike is launched.



HIDDEN DEEP in the snowy arctic wastes, a terrorist group known as Q-Liberation has seized two nuclear submarines. Your men have to perform a number of preparatory strikes, including assassinating the terrorists' leader and setting up homing beacons on the subs for air-launched bombs to home in on.

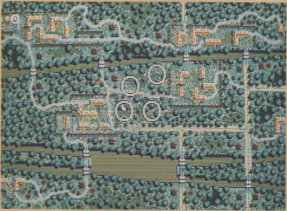


A MAJOR DRUGS cartel is being protected by the local militia and has recently kidnapped that country's president. Your task is to do as much damage to drug fields, the refinement plants and the stronghold as possible before mounting a rescue operation.



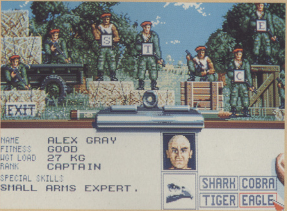
A MILITARY COUP has taken place in a small banana republic (no, this is in no way influenced by the recent Russian coup, uh uh, no way) and your men have to sabotage a number of strategic targets so that the previous government can restore power.

FORCES



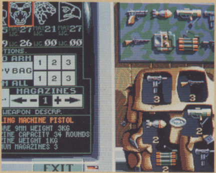
THE MAP SHOWS all the major buildings in the area and (depending on your difficulty level) where the objectives are. From here you can set individual routes for your men to travel along, giving rise to all sorts of strategies.

BEFORE EACH MISSION you have to select which four men from your squad of eight will participate. Each have different abilities and as time goes on, each can earn promotions, medals and, most importantly, experience.



NAME ALEX GRAY
FITNESS GOOD
WGT LOAD 27 KG
RANK CAPTAIN
SPECIAL SKILLS
SMALL ARMS EXPERT.

YOU CAN TAKE quite a bit of kit into the warzones, from Sterling Machine Pistols to L.A.W. rockets. For some missions it's necessary to take Laser Target Designators along, to give a forthcoming airstrike a target to aim for.



WEAPON DESCRP.
LING MACHINE PISTOL
RE 9MM WEIGHT 3KG
ZINE CAPACITY 34 ROUNDS
ZINE WEIGHT 1KG
MUM MAGAZINES 3

THE WORD

HAVING COVERED virtually every aspect of technical warfare, it seems only natural that MicroProse should turn its attention to the 'grunts'. It did it once before in *Airborne Ranger* – an 8-bit game that didn't quite cut the sales mustard – and has done it again with *Special Forces*, which is essentially Airborne Ranger 2. At first glance it looks like a cross between *Gauntlet* and *Commando*, and despite the lack of two-player controls it plays like one as well. This game is screaming for multi-player action. Having four players controlling each team member via link-up cable or a four-way joystick adaptor would seem the most obvious of features. Instead, you'll more often than not end up battling through each mission with just one soldier, pretending to be Rambo or Schwarzenegger: this works quite well, giving a feeling of overall control which is, unfortunately, lost with more than one soldier. Plotting destinations on the map and setting your men on their way is all well and good from a strategic point of view (and in fact strategists or simulation buffs who feel like an action break may very well find this appealing, balancing a basic amount of tactics with only a fair amount of arcade skills, garnished with all the usual high-quality MicroProse detail), but for gun-toting arcade players, there just isn't enough variety to satisfy.

A nice idea that's been very well implemented, but could do with a little more variety and depth

Paul Presley

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emap. images

It's been a long time coming, but can Anco's latest do for basketball what *Kick Off* did for football?

TIP OFF

BASKETBALL'S BIGGEST PROBLEM is that it looks silly. I mean, 20 grown men running around on an area the size of a tennis court, bouncing a large orange ball and throwing it into two nets. That and the term 'dribbling'. How many jokes have you heard that combine saliva with basketball?

Following the massive success of its *Kick Off* series, Anco (and, more immediately, Steve Screech) has now decided to turn its attention to this most silly of sports, combining everything that makes for an enjoyable game with the very essence of Kick Off. How can it fail? Well, just read on and you'll find out...

TIP OFF
ANCO

PRICE
£25.99

OUT
NOW

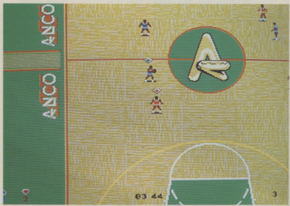
GRAPHICS
75%

SOUND
80%

DURABILITY
48%

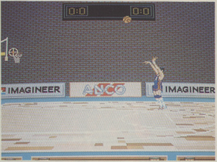
PLAYABILITY
55%

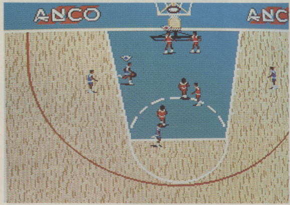
OVERALL
50%



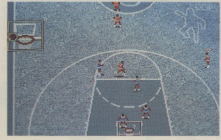
TIP OFF OWES MUCH of its design to *Kick Off*, from the tiny Lemming-like players to the different styles of pitches. This rather spiffy looking one is the International court.

THE PRACTICE OPTIONS allow you to test your skills as a team or on an individual basis. The side-on view doesn't appear during a match, but the controls are still the same and it allows you to see what the player actually does when you wiggle the joystick aimlessly.

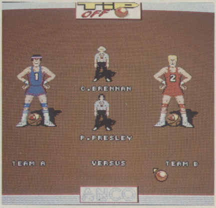




THIS MORE DOWN-MARKET surface is for the County league...

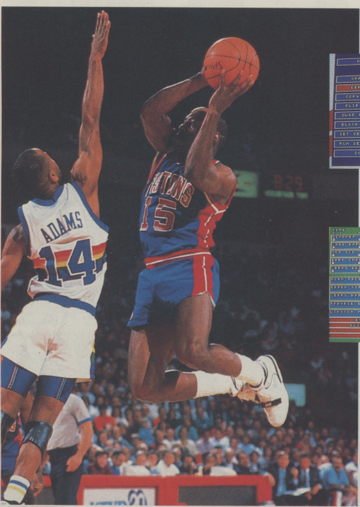


...and this inner-city ghetto (complete with murder scene chalk marks) is for the youth of the country to play on.

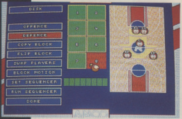


RECOGNISE THE TWO 'famous' (or should that be 'infamous') referees. These hard-nuts don't stand any nonsense, so commit a foul and you'll be back on the bench before you can say "Where are your glasses referee?".

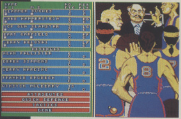
☞



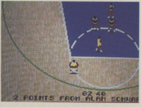
BEFORE EACH GAME you can select from any number of default tactics or you can load up your own. These are created in the tactics editor and, when used effectively, can make or break a game.



PLAYERS TIRE pretty quickly during each quarter and their fatigue levels have to be watched constantly if you want to stay ahead of the opposition. Regular substitutions and time-outs are necessary to win the game.



AT THE END of the day, it's all about points. Whoever scores the most when the whistle blows will walk away with a result, so scoring is special: so special that every time someone puts the ball through the net, he'll display his emotions.



THE WORD

The kind of game you'd have expected Anco to release before *Kick Off* came along

SINCE THE MOMENT it was announced, everybody was expecting *Tip Off* to be another *Kick Off* and unfortunately that's exactly what it is. The original Kick Off was chock-full of bugs, inadequacies and mistakes, most of which weren't really spotted until *Kick Off 2* came out. That said, it was still very playable. Tip Off is also chock-full of bugs, inadequacies and mistakes, the difference being that this time we know what we're looking for (if you manage to finish a game without it crashing we'd love to hear from you). One definite plus (and really one of the only ones) is the addition of 'Player Manager', a complete tactics designer that allows you to 'personalise' your game. But even that simply can't hide the fact that because of the bugs, Tip Off just isn't worth the asking price. To be honest, it's inexcusable that Anco has released a game in this state (God knows why we let it get away with the original Kick Off). With this kind of release, Anco is in real danger of becoming the Bros of the computer game world, one or two massive hits before fading into total obscurity. We can only hope that *Tip Off 2* will be good enough to do for Tip Off what Kick Off 2 did for Kick Off, that is, make it playable.

Paul Presley

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A mega game on the Mega Drive, the definitive American Football simulation makes the conversion to home computer. Is it a perfect touchdown or a desperate fumble?

JOHN MADDEN AMERICAN FOOTBALL
ELECTRONIC ARTS

PRICE
£25.99

OUT
END FEB

GRAPHICS 81%

SOUND 91%

DURABILITY 89%

PLAYABILITY 92%

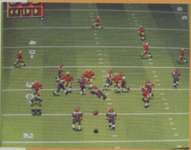
OVERALL 91%

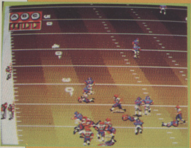
JOHN MADDEN

AMERICAN FOOTBALL IS A GAME for wimps. It must be, otherwise why all the padding? Real men – rugby men – don't bother with fancy shoulder pads and helmets, just brute strength to mash their opponents' faces into goo. Still, some people seem to like it, especially in America. It's the second most popular sport after baseball (another rip-off of a British game – cricket), with players earning millions of dollars per season, Mick 'More Wooden Than *Neighbours*' Luckhurst presenting his very own TV show on Channel 4: it's enough to make you give up Hull Kingston Rovers and move over to the San Francisco 49ers.

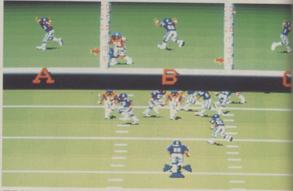
Over on the Sega Mega Drive, one sports simulation has proven to be more popular than any other – *John Madden American Football*. Thankfully, Electronic Arts has decided that such a superlative console title deserves a wider audience and has converted the whole game, mud 'n' all, to the Amiga. It's also enhanced some areas, tidied others up and found a way to make the three-button control method, crucial to the game's fluidity, work with a joystick – all without losing possession, phew!

1992 AND ALL THAT

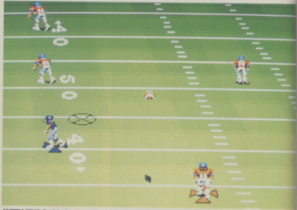




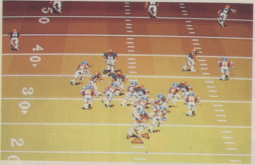
RECENTLY RELEASED on the Mega Drive is *John Madden Football '92*, which is more of a John Madden American Football v2.0 than a sequel. The game itself has remained the same, the only differences being in the presentation and the addition of 'special effects', such as ambulances for injured players and asking Mr. Madden for help in choosing plays. Electronic Arts is currently planning to release the Amiga version as a data disk as opposed to a stand-alone game, but the whole project is still in the planning stage.



THE QUARTERBACK is the 'captain', deciding exactly what kind of play the team will perform on that particular down. Passing plays involve throwing the ball to a pre-selected position, to be caught by one of three wide receivers, tight ends or split ends (as indicated in the A B and C boxes).

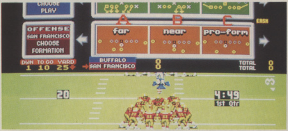


WITH THE BALL thrown, the player takes control of the receiver, moving him into the target area represented by the cross-hair. Around him, the defensive team can try to block the pass, strip it out of his hands or bring him down just as he catches the ball.



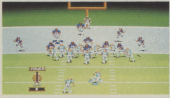
THE OTHER TYPE of play is a running play, in which the quarterback hands the ball off to a running back behind the line of scrimmage while the rest of the team try to open up a hole in the opponent's line for him to run through.

AMERICAN FOOTBALL



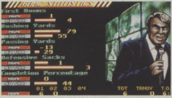
BEFORE EACH PLAY both teams enter a huddle and you get to choose your particular set (group of players), formation and play. You only have 45 seconds to choose your play, otherwise your team is penalised five yards (the ball is moved up or down the pitch five yards and you start again).

THERE ARE FOUR WAYS to score points in American Football but the most common is the touchdown. Advance the ball into your opponent's endzone and you're rewarded with six points and a little dance (although these have been banned in the real game for time-wasting).



SCORE A TOUCHDOWN or attempt a field goal and the kicking team jaunts onto the pitch. Lining up in front of the goal, the ball is snapped to the kicker who has to get between the 'uprights'. Field goals are worth three points while point-after-touchdowns (P.A.T.s – equivalent to a conversion in rugby) are worth one.

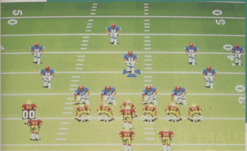
AT HALF-TIME and the end of the match, John Madden appears with a statistic sheet showing how many yards you made, what the score is, how many throws were attempted and completed and so on.



EASY AS A B C

AT THE VERY HEART of *John Madden American Football* is the three-button control method, and Electronic Arts has managed to convert it extremely well to the single-button joystick that we all know and love.

To pick one of the three selected plays or to choose which receiver to throw the ball to, you simply press and hold the fire button, move the joystick left for the A window, up for the B window or right for the C window and then release the fire button.



AS THE QUARTERBACK bends over suggestively, the rest of the team line up in their positions. As soon as the ball is hiked (passed back to the quarterback to begin the play) the offense has four downs (plays) to advance the ball 10 yards down the pitch.

THE WORD

HOW DO YOU CONVERT a game that requires three separate control buttons to a joystick? Solve that problem and everything else falls into place when you're dealing with a game of this quality. The 'press fire, move stick, release fire' method actually works for picking the plays once you're used to it, as does the tap or hold fire button system out on the field. On the whole, Electronic Arts has made an excellent job of the conversion, sprucing up the console's rather bland front end and adding some decent presentation screens. The only areas that have problems are the player's animations and the effectiveness of your defensive team (but this applies to the console version as well, so you can probably forgive them). Offensive plays work fine, passing is a cinch to get used to and running plays, while less effective overall, do at least work as they should. The same, however, can't be said of your defensive side, who very rarely behave as they're supposed to, hardly ever set themselves up in the correct positions and can't tackle to save their lives. This isn't actually true, they probably could tackle perfectly well, it's just that the manual offers no clues as to how and no manner of joystick combinations seem to have an effect (causing the players just to run around with their arms in the air). The target will go down eventually, but only through a mad frenzy of random joystick wrenching. Madden's is playable though – very playable – and it's one of the best American Football sims currently on the Amiga (rivalled only by the classic *TV Sports Football*).

One of the best American Football games around

Paul Presley

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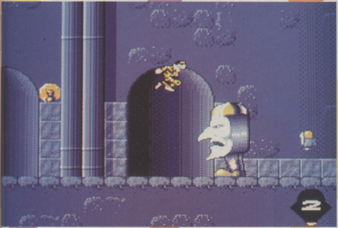
A good heart these days is hard to find, especially when it's in four pieces. Enter a diamond-clad, jumpsuit-wearing hero from a bizarre world.

HARLEQUIN



YOU BEGIN YOUR QUEST outside Chimerica's clock tower. To reach the later levels you have to grab hold of a kite at the top. Unfortunately, this isn't possible unless you get the clock hands to move, which you can only do if you find the switch within the clock's inner workings.

THE LAND OF CHIMERICA is in trouble. When the Harlequin left for pastures new it was a happy, thriving, pleasant place with many weird and wonderful areas and many, many colourful creatures.

Not any more. Chimerica is now a broken place. The lands are filled with villains and creatures bent on wreaking havoc and to make matters worse, some dastardly ne'er do well has rent the very heart of Chimerica asunder, splitting it into four pieces and scattering the pieces across the conveniently platform-laden land.

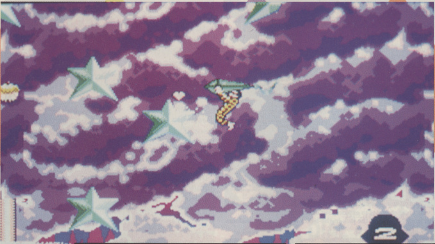
No Harlequin worth his face-mask would stand for such an outrage and with only his own beating heart, his spacehopper and his curious fish-changing ability for weapons, he sets out to put things right.

HARLEQUIN
GREMLIN

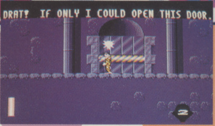
PRICE
£25.99

OUT
NOW

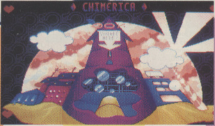
GRAPHICS	91%
SOUND	90%
DURABILITY	92%
PLAYABILITY	89%
OVERALL	90%



COMPLETING THE LEVELS within the clock, you make your way back to the tower and grab hold of the kite. This takes you to a bonus stage that takes the form of a simple shoot 'em up.

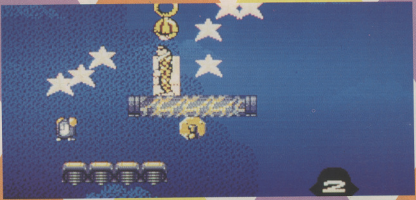


THERE ARE plenty of puzzles, although it isn't always obvious where they are. To help you out, a light bulb occasionally appears above your head, indicating that if you wait around for a moment, a clue will reveal itself.

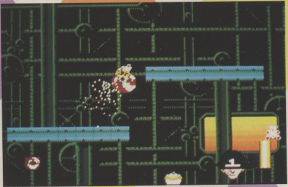


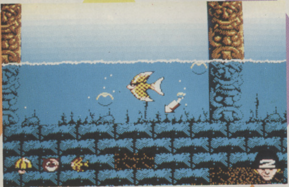
THERE ARE 22 levels in Harlequin. This between-level map shows you whereabouts you are, how much of the game you've completed and what levels are yet to come.

SCATTERED AROUND the levels are small jack-in-the-boxes containing a bonus of some sort. Just stand in front of them and the bonus will shoot out. Usually it will be a life-restoring hamburger, but occasionally something more fruitful is on offer.



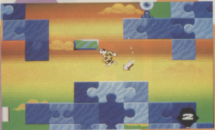
SPACE HOPPERS allow you to travel across long distances with a certain degree of safety. Bounce onto an enemy and he's unlikely to survive.





SOME LEVELS contain vast areas of water to explore, but unfortunately Harlequin can't swim. Pick up a fish icon from one of the jack-in-the-boxes and you can transform into a beautiful angel fish.

ANOTHER BONUS is in the form of a circling shield arrow. Up to four can be picked up forming an impregnable barrier – until they run out of power that is.



THE WORD

THERE'S NO DOUBTING *Harlequin*'s complexity: not since *Gods* has a platform game been so 'intelligent'. A good example of this is the virtual television – you have to find a switch in the warehouse section that selects a channel on the end-of-level TV. You can then enter that program, play the level, come back out, change the channel and go back in again to play a different level. The fact that you can also take any route you like, often playing through some levels in order to open up another route on a previous one, also adds to the sheer enjoyment of the game. That's the key, Harlequin really is an enjoyable game to play. You feel as though you're actually achieving something as you progress through the levels and you're rewarded with some fantastic graphics and sound effects. If there is a gripe, it's that the control method is somewhat tricky to get the hang of. The strange inertia system can often make timing jumps pretty difficult and you can find yourself plummeting to the bottom of a particularly tricky section after missing a tiny platform. You'll probably get used to it in time, but it is offputting at first. Still, Harlequin is one of the best platform games to come along for ages. The dark and moody atmosphere might not suit everyone, but once you get into it you'll find it hard to get back out again.

A superior platform cum puzzle game with bags of atmosphere

Paul Presley

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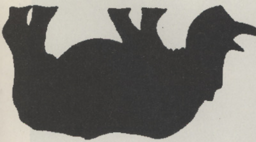

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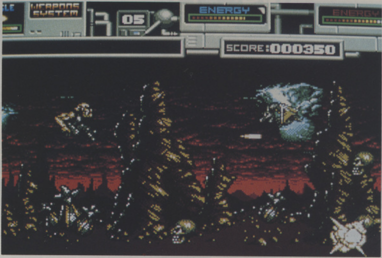
Radiation leak? Mutated enemies? Mysterious circumstances? Sounds like time to send in Jools Watsham...

RUBICON
21st CENTURY ENTERTAINMENT

PRICE
£25.99

OUT
NOW

GRAPHICS	87%
SOUND	86%
DURABILITY	56%
PLAYABILITY	70%
OVERALL	66%



BEGIN YOUR working day on a barren wasteland, defaced by a volcanic eruption, where you're attacked by swarms of flying creatures, dropping gnashing skulls armed with vicious teeth. Kill these off and you can progress to the next part of the level – but only if you manage to deal with the numerous mid-level guardians.

RUBICON

THE YEAR IS 2011 and an explosion has wrecked a Russian power plant, causing a massive radiation leak which has spread as far as Finland. Although all the survivors have managed to reach safety, the countless attempts which have been made to make the plant safe again have all been unsuccessful – some missions have even ended in suspicious circumstances.

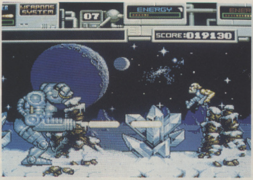
Worse still, reports are beginning to trickle back of mutated animals roaming the area, savagely attacking anyone who goes near the power plant.

Being a hard ex-army Colonel, you're just the guy to sort out this mess. To successfully reach the plant, you need to make your way through the seven horizontally scrolling levels, which are all infested with mutated weirdos with one thing in common... a taste for your blood.

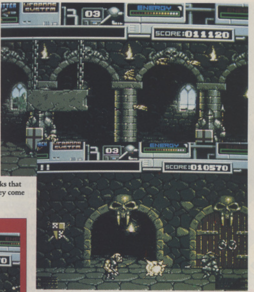
If you think you've got what it takes to hold down your dinner when confronting these mutations, and your biceps bulge enough to scare most of them away without a fight, then get out there and get blasting.

THE JET-PACK is particularly useful when confronting a large guardian, as most of them have their weak spot higher than shoulder level.

TO POWER UP your gun/jet-pack/scatter gun/napalm/seekers/rockets/bolt lasers, all you have to do is select the one you want and press the corresponding function key. From then on, you simply collect the canisters which periodically appear throughout the game. Simple!

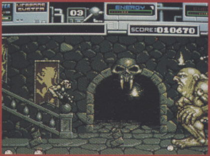

WEAPONS SYSTEM
07
ENERGY
SCORE:019130

THE FUTURISTIC LEVEL is full of mechanical robots, huge helicopters and tanks that repeatedly throw firepower at you, and don't give up too easily – worse still, they come at you from both sides of the screen.

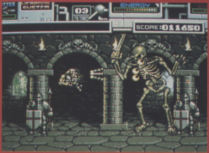

WEAPONS SYSTEM
03
ENERGY
SCORE:011120
WEAPONS SYSTEM
03
ENERGY
SCORE:010570

ONCE YOU'VE DEFEATED the dragon at the end of level one, it's time to make your way through the castle. Inside, the main ugly is a gargoyle who jumps around the screen breathing fire at you. Other obstacles include concrete slabs which fall on your head and mysterious trapdoors.

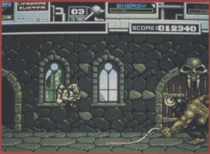
IN THE CASTLE the enemies are particularly big and nasty. The first you encounter is a big, fat, ugly giant. He merrily sits there and hammers the floor, making the ceiling fall down. After repeatedly shooting and dodging, this guy will be easily wasted.


WEAPONS SYSTEM
03
ENERGY
SCORE:010670

NEXT IN LINE is a massive skeleton. He jumps around the screen, slashing and swishing a sword at you. His fight pattern is very basic (jump left, jump right), so defeating old skinny should be a breeze.


WEAPONS SYSTEM
03
ENERGY
SCORE:011650

LAST BUT NOT LEAST is the whipper. This kinky fiend continually attempts to whip you. You can't get too close, so a jet-pack and seekers are a good idea at this point.


WEAPONS SYSTEM
03
ENERGY
SCORE:012340

THE WORD

Looks good, sounds good, plays badly

IF LOOKS COULD KILL, then this game would have no trouble destroying the opposition, as it incorporates some of the nicest backdrops and enemy sprites I've ever seen. But what good is that when the action slows down as soon as a few sprites jump onto the screen? What a choker! There you are, trying to get past one of the guardians when suddenly the whole screen decides to go into slow motion. Come to think of it, the storyline's none too bright either: it says that you're entering a radiation zone that's infested with mutated animals, but when you reach level three there's a man driving a tank! The stop/start nature of things is also very off-putting and tends to ruin the flow of each level.

There, that's probably enough criticism. The music and in-game sound effects add a nice atmosphere (especially the 'God damn!' exclamation when you die), but this certainly isn't enough to justify the £25.99 asking price.

Jools Watsham

Welcome to a world where fantasy is reality and untold wealth and fame – or an early grave – await those brave enough to take their destiny in their hands.

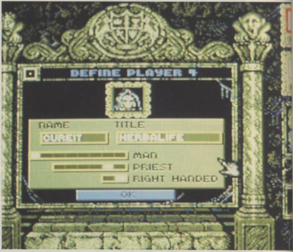
KNIGHT

KNIGHT-MARE
MINDSCAPE

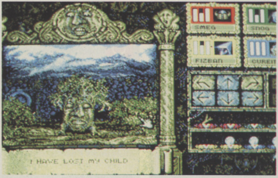
PRICE	£30.99
OUT	NOW
GRAPHICS	84%
SOUND	70%
DURABILITY	93%
PLAYABILITY	85%
OVERALL	80%

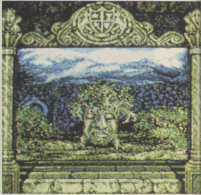
FOR TELLY ADDICTS, the name *Knightmare* will conjure up images of hapless kids trekking around computer-generated dungeons, wearing helmets designed to blind them and shouting a lot. In this version you start with your sight but very little else, given only the scantest details about your quest and no real reason for being there, other than the sheer pleasure of the challenge. And why not, when the challenge is as mighty as this?

Some roleplaying games offer you action, others stack the odds against you by starting you with a handicap. Knightmare does both; not only do you begin without weapons to hand but you also have to forage around a forest looking for your clothes! As you explore, rabbits and gnomes cross your path and it's here that you must cut your teeth on the battle system. With a weapon, you're allowed a choice of actions depending on your skills and the weapon type; without one, you're restricted to punches or kicks.

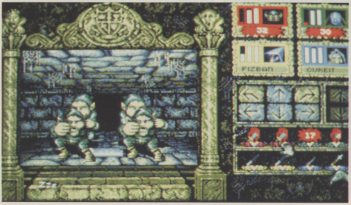

DEFINE PLAYER 4
NAME CUREIT
TITLE HERBALIFE
MAN
PRIEST
RIGHT HANDED

WHAT'S THIS? A talking tree? What was in that rabbit pie I ate earlier? "I have lost my child"? You can't pin that single parent bit on me, I always take precautions when I meet strange trees...


I HAVE LOST MY CHILD



OH, YOU WANTED THE TWIG! That was what you meant by your child. Right. And you've left me this rather nifty walking stick as a reward? So kind. That'll come in handy for, oh, I can hardly count the uses. Never mind, at least the tree's out of the way and we can go through that door now.



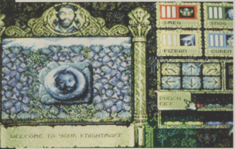
THAT ARCANE symbol on the floor looks interesting, but where did the wall go? And those little green men don't look so happy now that we've made it disappear. Calm down, guys. No? Running away to a safe place to fight them might be a good move, then.

LIFE ON THE OCEAN, or subterranean, wave isn't everyone's cuppa, but you'll have to do plenty of rowing to find that Shield. Those snapping fishes don't look too pleasant. The trick here is to keep moving, don't let them trap you in a corner... something that happens a lot more easily in a rowing boat than you might think!

MARE

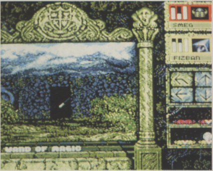
SMEG
SNOG
FIZBAN

HERE'S YOUR VERY OWN version of *Blind Date*. You've got to select a class or profession for each character, then give him a name and a race. You're spoilt for choice; will you select Ogre, Elf, Gnome, Gobin or boring old Human? You can even choose whether they're right or left-handed!

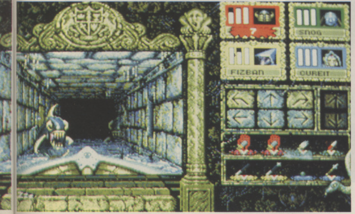


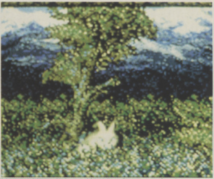
THE FIRST OF MANY appearances by Treguard, the dungeon master, who pops up from time to time with helpful snippets of advice. Perhaps the most obvious comment here would be, "Call that a weapon?", as you begin as a team without any clothes on!

SMEG
SNOG
FIZBAN
CUREIT



OKAY, I ADMIT I was wrong. How was I to know that it was a MAGIC stick, or that it will let me cast lots of stonky spells? They'll certainly come in handy, now that we've actually found the dungeon entrance and the quest for the shield is under way.





THE PARTY FACES – a rabbit! Time for revenge for those nightmares you got as a child from watching *Monty Python's Quest For The Holy Grail* when you should have been doing your homework. And you're armed with a terrifying, merciless, killer... twig.

THE WORD

LAST TIME AROUND, *Knightmare* wouldn't have won an award for anything. This time it won't get one for originality either. However, an old idea can still work if it's done well and Tony Crowther seems to be capable of doing that. Knightmare is difficult enough to make you want to headbutt the keyboard in frustration and it's varied enough to keep all roleplaying fans glued to their mice for many eye-straining hours, too. Graphically, the game is superb: colourful, rich and imaginatively drawn. There's just one snag: the small details on the screen, the buttons to press and objects to gather are sometimes hard to spot, which is fine in terms of the difficulty level, but just try spotting them after a hard night's monster-bashing. There's a spell, Glow, which makes the spotting of keys and such like a bit easier, but this doesn't help early on when you don't have the magic staff. There's little here to remind you of the TV show. If you were looking for a solution to the frustrating "I could do better than those idiots" feeling that you get when you're watching telly, then look elsewhere. However, if you're a roleplaying fan who isn't all that keen on sleeping, Knightmare could very well be the game for you.

Hardly original, not much of a licence, but enjoyable nonetheless

Ashley Cotter-Cairns

The fight is on for control of organised crime in America. US Gold has chosen you, a humble Mafia hood, to sort it all out.

THE GODFAT
THE ACTION

THE GODFATHER – THE ACTION GAME
US GOLD

PRICE
£30.99

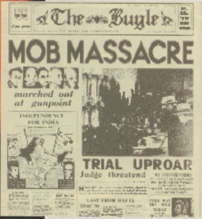
OUT
NOW

GRAPHICS	88%
SOUND	76%
DURABILITY	82%
PLAYABILITY	79%
OVERALL	80%

THE GODFATHER, written by Mario Puzo, has inspired a trilogy of block-busting movies which detail the history of the Corleone family from 1901 to the present, using a cast of thousands.

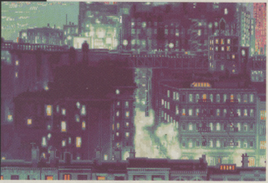
This game is loosely based on all three films, with five levels taking the story from 1940s New York to a small US town in the 1980s. Along the way you have to wipe out an opposing family's hoods in a 1950s Las Vegas casino, infiltrate Hyman Roth's mansion in Havana and fight your way onto an opponent's luxurious cruiser in Miami.

The showdown comes at a gathering of all the heads of the Mafia families. The meeting is disturbed by a helicopter hovering outside – to maintain peace and harmony among the rival clans you have to destroy it. The price of failure is unending bloodshed...

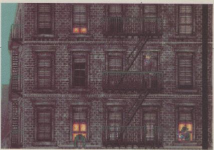


A COLOURFUL intro sequence sets the scene: it's post-war America and five families are involved in a struggle for the control of organised crime. The game begins in New York in 1946 with news of a massacre.

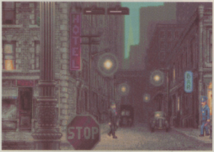
FEATURING parallax scrolling, the intro pans downwards, taking in the skyline of New York and leaving you at the beginning of Level One.



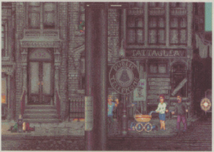
HER GAME



MANY A TIME you're called on to climb up the side of a building: there's a fire escape handy, and at the top you should find a useful object. There are of course plenty of criminals leaning out of the windows or trying to drop bricks on your head.



THIS IS the start of level one: the back streets of New York in the 1940s. It's a quiet enough scene: walk a little further along the street, though, and you'll find that this town has more criminals than the Costa del Sol, and most are armed. There are three ways to avoid their bullets: duck, move 'in' or 'out' of the screen, or just shoot them first.



MUCH OF the action involves shooting, fighting and picking up objects dropped by enemies. These street scenes have a twist: not everyone you see is out to do you in. Could this woman pushing a pram be a hood in disguise? If you decide to shoot her, it could save your neck...

...or, if she was just trying to get to the shops for a tin of powdered milk, it's game over. Shooting crooks is the day-to-day business of the Mafia man, but wiping out humble civilians brings shame and dishonour upon your line, and your family is quick to disown you.

THERE ARE FIVE levels in all, each consisting of a street scene and a 3D 'Duck Shoot' style section, where you have to wipe out enemies who appear from behind handy bits of scenic camouflage. Whichever level you're on, bullets are bad for your health: eat too much lead and you'll face a grave situation.

THE WORD

ONE OF THE FIRST things you notice about this game is that, without the *Godfather* name tagged onto it, you wouldn't be able to tell that it was based on the films. There are a couple of sequences – the final helicopter shoot-out, for example – which draw their inspiration from celluloid, but otherwise the characters bear no likeness to their movie equivalent, and the music is only vaguely evocative. This is no bad thing, since lurking behind the licence is a decent shoot 'em up, with enough difficulty and depth to keep you coming back for many a night. It looks good, too: the background graphics are unerringly excellent and convey each decade and location brilliantly, and all the sprites are well animated. The only visual drawback is the scrolling, which slows annoyingly when there is plenty happening on-screen (such as a couple of cars appearing at once). The action is ambitious and reasonably tough: the division of the levels into street scenes (with tough end-of-level opponents) and 3D Duck Shoot works well, but there is a fair amount of disk swapping if you only have one drive. The presentation is a bit disappointing: apart from an excellent introductory demo, there's nothing in the way of in-game statistics, such as a health meter, nor any information about the objects you can pick up. The instructions don't help much: all you get is some background and the joystick controls. This is a fairly simple action game, so you don't need a huge manual, but for over £30 you expect more than a single information sheet and an eight-page mini-booklet detailing 'a pictographic history' of The Godfather trilogy. If you can put up with its faults and the relatively high price tag, there are six disks' worth of challenging shoot 'em up action ahead.

An ambitious conversion of a difficult licence

Gordon Houghton

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GO! Grab it quick - it's going fast!

COMPUTER +VIDEO GAMES

Alestes and Mentor have the task of staying alive if they want to gain the knowledge of Cosmic Power – but to achieve this they'll go through sheer...

AGONY

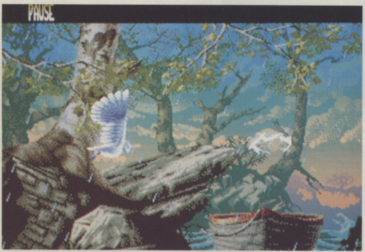
AGONY PSYGNOSIS	
PRICE	£25.99
OUT	NOW
GRAPHICS	92%
SOUND	90%
DURABILITY	74%
PLAYABILITY	79%
OVERALL	84%

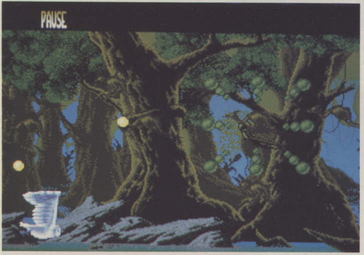
ACANTHROPSIS' DAYS are numbered. He's growing weak, so the secret of Cosmic Power needs to be passed down to one of his apprentices, Alestes and Mentor. They are both equally skilled in magic and both deserve the knowledge of Cosmic Power, so a test is needed to determine who it shall be.

For a reason best known to himself, Acanthropsis has decided that the two apprentices should undergo these tests as owls (which bear more than a passing resemblance to Psygnosis' logo), but they can use their own skills to equip themselves with weapons, such as laser beams.

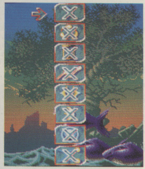
You take control of Alestes, with Mentor trying to make the test as hard as possible for you. Guide him through the six horizontally scrolling multi-parallax levels, which are all different in appearance, enemies and difficulty. Mentor will try to throw all manner of weird and wonderful creatures at you, so powering up is essential.

STARTING OUT on your intrepid adventure, you're armed with a small laser shot which causes minimal damage, so plenty of fire button hammering is needed. As you fly past the forest-type backdrops you're bombarded by ugly enemies that enter from above and below. Other enemies, including Venus flytraps and worms are sent by Mentor to do their worst, but you can handle them.

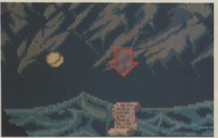




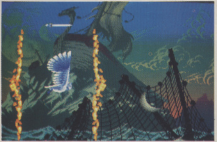
LEVEL TWO is much the same as level one. A nice parallax scenery whizzes past as you frantically dispose of the bad guys. But this time you get to feel the rain flow through your feathers and look at the lovely waterfalls – straight from a fairy tale. The enemies come from all angles, so getting some meaty fire power is essential.



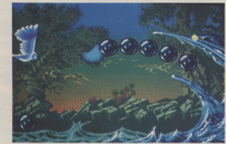
FROM TOP TO BOTTOM: box number one powers you up with reverse energy (fire power from behind), box two: rotating fireball (all round protection), box three: time freeze (freezes all on-screen enemies), box four: black magic seeker (homes in on enemies), box five: plasma shield (protection shield), box six: smart bomb (destroys on-screen enemies with one blow), box seven: invulnerability (erm... invulnerability), and finally box eight gives you forward power (powerful front shot).



AFTER YOU'VE DISPOSED of an entire attack wave, you're sometimes rewarded with a magical scroll. These have the right ingredients for a particular spell (or weapon in your case).



WHEN YOU'VE successfully picked up a scroll, you simply hold down fire to call up the power-up menu. The weapon you've picked up will be shown. Here you have the trusty plasma power-up, especially useful when confronting the sea guardian.



THIS GIANT sea guardian greets you at the end of the sea level . There he is, minding his own business, when a giant owl comes flying towards him pelting lasers at him left, right and centre. He's not impressed with this, so he takes it upon himself to spew out dozens of lethal balls.

WEIRDO HERO

If you look at the top selling games on the shelves of your local software shop, the betting is that over 50 per cent will have weird, strange or ugly main characters. But we're still mad enough to fall in love with 'em.

JAMES POND: UNDERWATER AGENT

You might not think that a fish is all that weird, but how many fish have you seen roaming around the sea, saving the world from pollution?

THE NEW ZEALAND STORY

This old favourite has one of the strangest main characters – a Kiwi! You definitely don't get too many of them wandering around brightly coloured platforms shooting weird creatures with a bow and arrow. Although weird, a great game.

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG

Sega's big seller is a blue spiked hedgehog! Would you have believed it if someone had told you? No, I didn't think so. The reason everyone has fallen in love with this prickly character is that the artist who invented the little chap made him as cute and friendly as possible – and it seems to have worked.

THE DIZZY COLLECTION

Code Masters' well known and adored little character is an egg. This cute guy appears in their collection of Dizzy worlds, where the hero needs to rescue the rest of his family. As he tumbles across the screen you can't help falling in love with him.

THE MAGIC GARDEN

Oh dear, the 'star' of Electronic Zoo's Magic Garden is a gnome! This little character waddles around the garden fixing this and that, while the watching crowd cringes at the sight of him (he's one ugly mother).

SUPER MARIO BROTHERS 3

Another money-spinning character that just makes you wonder 'why?', is the plumber who runs around on multi-coloured platforms disposing of mushrooms and tortoises. There are, obviously, attractions to Mario: he's a cute little Italian guy with a moustache, the playability is great and it's easy to play.

What weird character will spring up next? A scantily clad budgie on the rampage to save the world from birdnappers? Who knows!

THE WORD

A great technical and graphical achievement, but nothing new

LET'S GET ONE THING STRAIGHT: ***Agony*** **is a straightforward shoot 'em up with no more gameplay than any other competent shoot 'em up on the market. Having said that, though, it has got a few elements that make it stand out from your usual run-of-the-mill shoot-everything-you-see type of game. The first obvious thing is the graphics: Alestes is beautifully animated and the enemies are just as good in terms of appearance, although their animation isn't quite as slick. The backdrops are colourful and scroll smoothly (keep your eyes peeled for the unicorn which gets struck by lightning), and the few layers of parallax gives it a nice sense of perspective. As for the gameplay, it's what you'd expect from a shoot 'em up – you move up and down, dodging enemies and bullets, while frantically hammering your fire button to dispose of all creatures and to release bonuses.**

A technically brilliant game that serves the genre nicely.

Jools Watsham

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Mail Order only

Hot on the heels of *Knights Of The Sky* comes America's latest war effort.

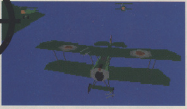
RED BARON
DYNAMIX

PRICE	£34.99
OUT	NOW
GRAPHICS	92%
SOUND	91%
DURABILITY	85%
PLAYABILITY	50%
OVERALL	65%

RED BARON

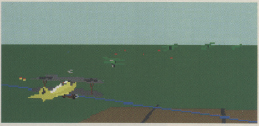
IT'S ALWAYS BEEN a good twist to play the bad guy in a game, but how often do you get the chance to play an entire nation of bad guys (no offence to our present-day German pals)? Thanks to Dynamix you can take to the skies in any one of 28 different fighters, for either the Allied or the German Air Forces. Yes, you too can face either Harry Hun or Thoze Englunder Schweinhunds.

Red Baron gives you the chance not only to fly a war career on either side, but also to take on any of the aces of the time in conditions of your choosing. Each of the aces has been modelled on their real-life counterparts and behaves accordingly in the air. For example, the Red Baron will never perform a loop as the original character didn't feel that such a manoeuvre had a place in air combat.

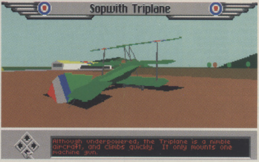


AT THE START of each mission it's a good bet that you'll have up to three wingmen flying with you. You won't always be in command of each flight, but you can alert your crew to any imminent danger by shouting at them.

HERE'S WHAT it's all about: up in the sky, over the trenches. Your cockpit contains all the instruments of the day, including altimeter, engine gauges and the ball-bearing artificial horizon.



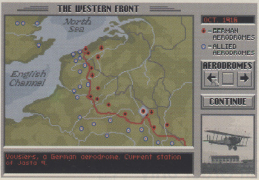
ONCE YOU'VE ENCOUNTERED the enemy you'll find that aircraft identification becomes a bit tricky, especially if you're using wireframe graphics.



Sopwith Triplane

Although underpowered, the Triplane is a nimble aircraft, and climbs quickly. It only mounts one machine gun.

EACH OF THE 28 aircraft has its own characteristics. To find out the strengths and weaknesses of each, check them out while resting in the hangar.



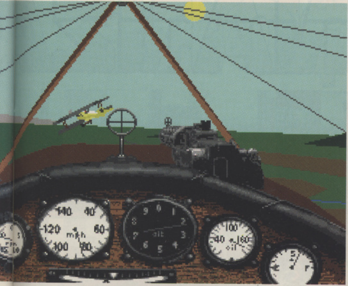
THE WESTERN FRONT

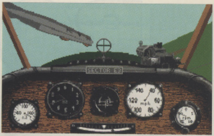
OCT. 1916

- GERMAN AERODROMES
- ALLIED AERODROMES

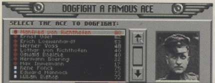
Vousiers, a German aerodrome. Current station of Jasta 9.

YOU MAY NOTICE that your exploits in the air have little effect on events on the ground. During World War I the front barely moved either way until right towards the end when everyone went 'over the top'. Don't be disheartened though, you are having some effect on the outcome.





NOT ALL MISSIONS are straight dogfights. Amongst the more interesting things you'll find yourself doing will be balloon busting, bomber escorting and zeppelin hunting.



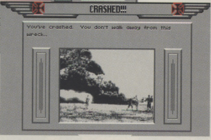
DOGFIGHT A FAMOUS ACE

SELECT THE ACE TO DOGFIGHT:

Manfred von Richthofen	80
Ernst Udet	62
Erich Loewenhardt	53
Werner Voss	48
Lothar von Richthofen	40
Oswald Boelcke	40
Hermann Goering	22
Max Immelmann	17
Rene Fonck	75
Edward Mannock	73
William Bishop	72

Due to the mystique
referred to Manfred
a master tactician ar
Oswald Boelcke, von F
Germany's most elite
hunter. When I have
passion is satisfied f

YOU CAN take on individual aces: everyone from Manfred von Richthofen (the Red Baron) to Capt. Roy Brown, the man who defeated the Baron, are included.



CRASHED!!!

You've crashed. You don't walk away from this wreck...

GOING UP doesn't guarantee you'll come down in one piece. If you crash you may not walk away. Survive over enemy territory and you may be taken prisoner.

ACES OF THE PACIFIC

DYNAMIX IS ALREADY WORKING on a follow-up to *Red Baron*. Called *Aces Of The Pacific*, it turns the clock forward to World War II and the start of America's aerial involvement in that lengthy conflict. With Pearl Harbour now a smoking wreck, World War II took on a whole new face as American and Japanese forces battled it out over the Pacific, launching for the first time from aircraft carriers and having to deal with kamikaze pilots.

Aces Of The Pacific allows you to fly for either side and adds a whole new dimension as you not only fly against airborne targets but start attacking ground installations as well. Aces will also leave itself open for exapansion through data disks and should appear around mid-Spring this year.

THE WORD

***RED BARON* SUFFERS from that most heinous of illnesses, PC port-over blues.** What used to be one of the best flight simulators has, unfortunately, become one of the slowest, jerkiest and therefore most unplayable. It is possible to sacrifice detail for speed: turning the planes from the rather nice filled-vector shapes to simple wireframe graphics and reducing the amount of ground detail to zero allows you to get some decent response, but has the side effect of making identification of enemy planes from your own wingmen nearly impossible. As you'd expect from an American product, Red Baron's presentation is nearly faultless. A huge 246-page manual, containing one of the most readable accounts of World War I to date accompanies the measly three disks and the simulation contains a setup panel that caters for practically every taste. On top of that, the mission recorder is a movie-maker's dream. But none of this really counts for anything as the core of the game is virtually unplayable. Red Baron promised so much and really should have been able to fly the pants off MicroProse's *Knights Of The Sky*. Instead, it's been left spluttering in the hangar as the other American flight sim specialist performs loops amidst the clouds.

Slow, ungainly and difficult to control in the air; a realistic simulation but hardly a playable one

Paul Presley

Hudson Hawk does it, Robin Hood does it, even Robert Maxwell got involved in it (or so they say). Now US Gold introduces a pair of thieves to beat the lot.

BONANZA BROS
US GOLD

PRICE
£25.99

OUT
NOW

GRAPHICS
80%

SOUND
85%

DURABILITY
72%

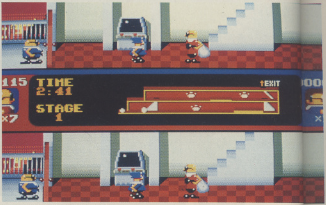
PLAYABILITY
79%

OVERALL
80%

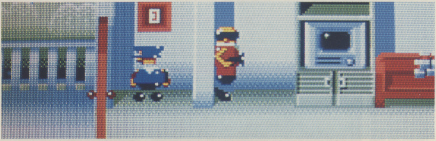
BONANZA

MOBO AND ROBO (or is that Robo and Mobo?) have had enough of the burglar's dangerous lifestyle. Skulking around in shadows, using suction cups to climb tall buildings, constantly on the run from the law: it's all become too much and the pair have decided to reform, go straight, turn over a new leaf. Unfortunately, fate seems to have turned that leaf straight back again.

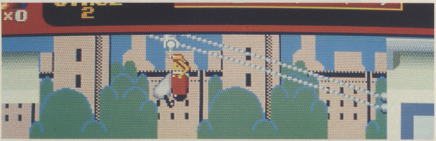
A mysterious stranger has hired the boys to do the very thing they're trying to steer clear of – burglary. A series of robberies have hit the stranger's businesses and he needs to have his security forces tested. All the boys have to do is to break into each of the buildings and retrieve certain objects, all the time avoiding the watchful eyes of the guards. If they succeed, riches untold await them. If they fail, it's straight back to the local nick.



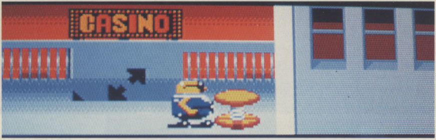
THE BIGGEST TASK facing the two boys is overcoming the guards on each level. There are two types: security officers, who either shoot or club you over the head and the armoured guards who can only be hit from behind and rush to attack whenever you're spotted.



TO AVOID BEING SPOTTED by the guards, Mobo and Robo can either shoot them and run or hide in the shadows. Pressing their backs flat against the wall, they go unnoticed.

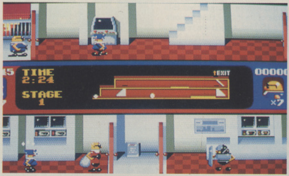


SOME BUILDINGS have more than one complex: one way of traversing the distance quickly is by a rope slide. Starting the slide is simply a case of jumping onto the pulley. Stopping is trickier, involving a face-on collision with a nearby wall.

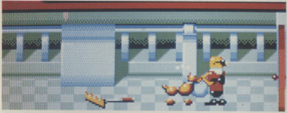


ANOTHER WAY of reaching the roof is to use a springboard. On some levels these mini-trampolines can be found, just waiting to be jumped on. Be careful though, there may be something nasty waiting for you at the top.

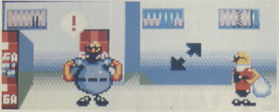
A BRO$



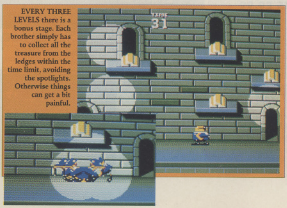
There are a number of objects for the Bros to collect. Depending on which level they're on, these can range from fruit machines to gold bullion.



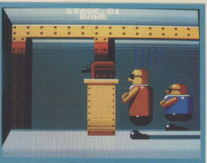
ALL GOOD security forces use dogs and these guys are no different. Thankfully they tend to be dopey, but should they get you, in true pit-bull fashion, they don't let go.

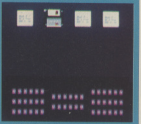


ONE OTHER TYPE of guard is the fat bomber. Although pretty harmless himself, his bombs can do untold damage if they're not avoided.



EVERY THREE LEVELS there is a bonus stage. Each brother simply has to collect all the treasure from the ledges within the time limit, avoiding the spotlights. Otherwise things can get a bit painful.





BEFORE EACH LEVEL, the twosome go over their plans. The required amount of objects is shown, along with what type of building they're about to 'hit'.

THE WORD

BONANZA BROS IS SOMETHING of an oddity. Its look, style and atmosphere are completely different, and I'm not entirely convinced that they work. For one thing, the front-end graphics look as if they've come straight off an 8-bit machine. The main problem, though, is repetitiveness: one level is pretty much the same as all the others, one guard is as hard as another and even the two Bros behave in the same way. If Robo had some different abilities to Mobo, things would already be 100 per cent better. The game isn't at all bad to play, it's just that it could have been a lot better. There are some very clever parts – slamming the door in someone's face, pressing up against a wall to hide, using a rope and pulley to traverse rooftops. You can see some of the thought that went into it, but you can't help wishing that there was more. Bonanza Bros is exactly the kind of game that you could find yourself wasting a couple of ten pences on in the arcade, but not something you'd want to spend any lengthy amount of time with.

Enjoyable enough, but too limited to make a lasting impression

Paul Presley

CHEAP AND CHEERFUL

A little strapped for cash? Well never fear, cos Watsham's here with a round-up of all that's new for under a tenner.

RATING

5 ABSOLUTELY BRILL (Kill for it)

4 BRILL (Maim for it)

3 PRETTY BRILL (Ask nicely for it)

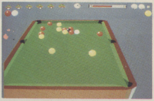
2 NEARLY BRILL (Hint for it)

1 NOWHERE NEAR BRILL (Don't ask for it)

3D POOL

STAR BUY

KIXX £7.99



WE'VE ALL DROPPED our jaws and gasped in amazement at the unnaturally realistic 3D ball action in Archer MacLean's wonderful *Jimmy White's Whirlwind Snooker*, but let's not forget that this wasn't the first game of its type – that honour goes to Nick Pelling's *3D Pool*, which we reviewed in the same issue as *Kick Off* and *Rick Dangerous* (Issue Nine, published in June 1989!) awarding it a then-impressive 88 per cent.

5

Although it pales in comparison to its newer relation, 3D Pool is still a remarkable game: it looks good, it feels perfect and has enough options to keep even the most schizophrenic player happy.

Mr. MacLean promises us his own rendition of pool in the near future (see News), complete with numbered balls. However, if you fancy yourself as a bit of a Fast Eddie and don't really want to wait to hit the tables, then this will make a more than adequate stopgap.

JAMES POND: UNDERWATER AGENT

GBH £7.99

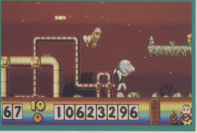
IF YOU ONLY KNOW James Pond though his Mario-beating exploits in Robocod, then here's your chance to catch up on his first great adventure, as the watery wonder (86 per cent, Issue 26) has returned in pocket-sized budget form.

Once again the plot's a little silly: the inhabitants of dry land have polluted the waters and J. P. is the only guy who can sort out the mess. Initially armed only with deadly bubbles, our hero has 12 levels to clean up – to help him out, he can pick up all sorts of useful gadgets at his home (such as the goldfish bowl which is used in the seal rescue).

Not all levels are in the warmth of the waters though: certain tasks require the scaly superhero to take to dry land where even more formidable foes await.

Cute is the first word that springs to mind when it comes to describing James Pond: Underwater Agent, playable is definitely the second – however if there is one problem, it might just be that the 12 levels aren't enough.

4



JET SET WILLY

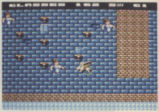
SOFTWARE PROJECTS £9.99

TWO SPECTRUM CLASSICS in the same month – I can barely contain myself! *Jet Set Willy*, of course, is the sequel to *Manic Miner*. Willy has now succeeded in making his fortune and has a yacht, a cliff-top mansion, an Italian housekeeper, a French cook and hundreds of new-found friends who are all party animals.

Maria, the housekeeper, is extremely house-proud and doesn't take kindly to the wild parties that Willy's been throwing. She's finally put her foot down and demanded that Willy clean up all of the items in the 100 rooms before he can relax in his four-poster bed.

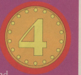
This isn't as easy as it sounds. The mechanical gadgets that Willy has collected with his fortune are still running, and they tend to get in the way when you're trying to clean up. With only the 16-bit version on disk, this isn't as appealing as Manic Miner. Why? Because 16-bit technology hasn't done Jet Set Willy any favours: although the play area, sprites and background are all larger, it just hasn't got the same feel! There will be a 'Spectrum' version along soon, so real Willy fans should probably wait for that.

3



MANIC MINER

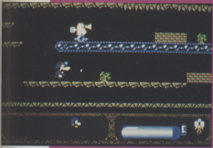
SOFTWARE PROJECTS
£9.99



ANYONE WHO ONCE HAD one of Sir Clive's little rubber-keyboarded wonder machines will no doubt remember this ancient classic, so you can just quit reading this review for a second to wallow in a little nostalgia (remember how you eventually managed to get past that darned penguin¿). However, for the rest of you who haven't heard of this Matthew Smith creation, here's the storyline...

Miner Willy leads a simple life, working all around the country. One day he stumbles upon an ancient, long forgotten mine-shaft. He decides to explore and finds evidence of a lost civilisation! Carved onto the walls is the story of how they lived in peace and harmony until a war tore them apart.

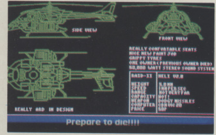
The only inhabitants of the mine now are industrial machines, still working because the people forgot to turn them off when they fled. Over the countless aeons, huge stockpiles of valuable metals and minerals have mounted up.



Willy realises that this is his chance to make his fortune, if he can find the underground store. Moving through the chambers, he has to collect keys to enter the next, eventually reaching the store room.

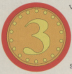
Included on the disk is a reconstruction of the Spectrum version, including the original graphics and sound. The 16-bit version may appeal to non-Manic Miner fans, but true fans will go straight for the Spectrum emulation.

SHOOT 'EM UP
CONSTRUCTION KIT



GBH £9.99

IT'S BEEN AROUND for quite some time now (and if you look at it in purely technical terms it's no longer the leader of the pack), but Palace's simple-to-use game creator is still a must for all of you would-be Eric Matthews out there who haven't got quite enough technical know-how to get to grips with some of the more complex programs.



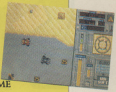
Actually, in this case the name is somewhat misleading, as this utility isn't just limited to creating simple shoot 'em ups – however, it does limit the user to two palettes – eight colours on the sprites and eight on the background (there's a sprite editor included which enables you to choose your colours and draw the sprites of your choice).

If you're a complete beginner to this type of thing, there are games supplied which have been made with *S.E.U.C.K* – just load them in to see 'how they did it'.

It has got to be said straight from the start, however, that you're unlikely to ever produce a game that would be fit to be published using this utility, but if you're looking for a way to put your ideas into practice (or even just like having a fiddle with sprites and sound effects) then this could very well be the program for you.

OTHER RELEASES

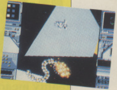
VENUS THE FLYTRAP
£7.99
(GBH)



ACTION FIGHTER
£7.99
(Kixx)

DRAGONS OF FLAME
£7.99
(Kixx)

JUPITER MASTERDRIVE
£7.99
(Action Sixteen)



SIR FRED
£7.99
(Action Sixteen)

MYSTICAL
£9.99
(Action Sixteen)

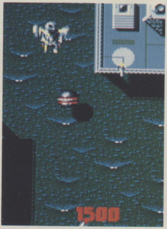
ROTOX
£9.99
(Action Sixteen)

COMBO RACER
£7.99
(GBH)

TOYOTA CELICA GT RALLY
£7.99
(GBH)

FIRST DIVISION MANAGER
£7.99
(Code Masters)

TILT
£7.99
(Code Masters)



A recreation of Storm's SWIV named Mission X, created with S.E.U.C.K.

ARCADES

What does Virtual Reality mean to you? A *Blue Peter* special on AIDS? Parents being reasonable? Everyone paying their Poll Tax? John Cook gets the low down on the latest in VR.

VIRTUAL REALITY IS, believe it or not, one of the most significant convergences of technologies since people started to file the corners off squares. The concept of submerging a human being in a generated environment is going to affect many aspects of our lives over the next 20 years, from medicine to manufacturing, design to defence.

A real understanding of its potential can only come by experiencing VR yourself; and unless you've got some good mates down at NASA or the Ministry of Defence, the only way to do that is to get down to an amusement arcade.

The only company currently offering true public domain VR systems is WI Industries, whose two latest releases are *ExoRex* and *Dactyl Nightmare*. ExoRex – which was called *Heavy Metal* in a previous incarnation – has a simple 'seek and destroy' style of gameplay, in which you sit in the cockpit of a M.A.N.T.I.S. (Medium Armoured Normal Terrain Incursion System), a giant bi-pedal fighting machine.

You've been fitted up by the evil ExoRex Corporation and now, to prove your innocence, you have to fight it out with up to four other convicts in a kind of trial by combat. The playfield is an abandoned cityscape called Arena and all four lucky contestants are lowered into the combat zone on lifts at its four corners. Sitting in the 1000SD unit, you control the M.A.N.T.I.S. using a steering wheel for direction of movement, pedals for forward and reverse and a lever with fire button on the left for Weapon Mode and fire. The direction of firing is controlled by your head movements, with the gunsight fixed to your nose. In Weapon Mode, you fire lasers and guided missiles, which lock on to your opponent if you can keep the sight fixed on him for long enough.

Pull the lever back and you get a Virtual Map of the whole city superimposed on the normal 3-D view. This Map is bigger than your view in the headset, so to study it in detail, you have to look up/down, left and right. This is useful as the Map shows you exactly where your other competitors are, but the down side is that you can't fire weapons in Map Mode and when you change back, it takes a few seconds for the system to switch on again, and for those few seconds you're fairly defenceless.

ExoRex certainly packs a punch and it would be pretty neat even if it wasn't in VR. Add to that the dimension of being inside the game itself and you have something really special.

For a more free-form, spaced out, mildly mindblowing experience, try Dactyl Nightmare, which runs on the 1000CS Cyberspace system. This is the one where you stand up while playing the game, using a 'Space Joystick' as a controller. This joystick is tracked by the system in the same way that your head movements are, and can be programmed to appear in the Virtual World as just about anything. In Dactyl Nightmare, most of the time it's a gun.

Played on a weird surreal playfield of linked platforms suspended in deep space, it's possible to link up to four machines together to make the whole thing an all-action experience.

Although you don't physically walk around in the Virtual Environment (you move by pressing the top joystick button, the lower being used for firing the gun), you do have to rotate in full 360 degrees, scanning the playfield up and down – and it's this feeling of being completely surrounded by the game (probably with a gun-wielding maniac right behind you), coupled with the use of the tracked joystick as a Virtual Arm, that makes this one so wild.

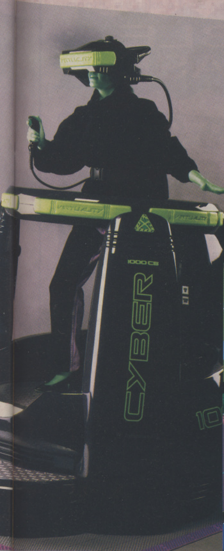
If all that isn't enough for you and you want a more complex game have been catered for with a 'Capture the Flag' mode of play, which pits two-on-two and adds extra weapons, such as a shield and....wait for it....a Virtual Axe. Watching the punters flailing around with this is particularly hoopy.

ExoRex and Dactyl Nightmare are both up and running now at two locations in London: the Trocadero in Piccadilly Circus and The Rock Garden in Covent Garden.

Even better, however, is something else which is currently in the works and which, by the time you read this, should be up and running on the first site in Nottingham.

Codenamed *CyberQuest*, this is a true D&D style role-playing adventure which looks, in a word, astonishing. Look out for more details as soon as we get them.

VIRTUALITY
VIRTUALITY


VIRTUALITY
VIRTUALITY
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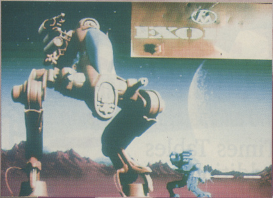
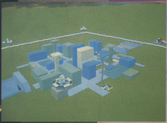
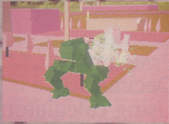
1000 CS
CYBER
10

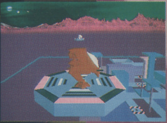
VIRTUALITY

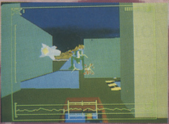
PICTURED ON THE LEFT is the 1000 CS Cyberspace system, the machine on which Dactyle Nightmare runs.

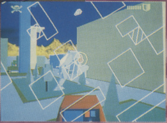


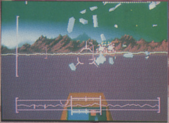


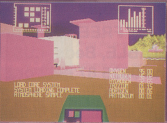












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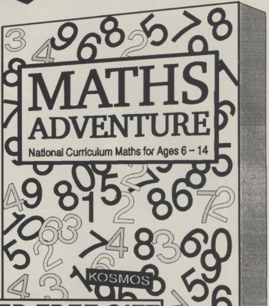

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VISA

It's been a disappointing month for demos. As the post-Christmas blues sink in even further than they did last month, we take a look at the best of the worst of the worst.

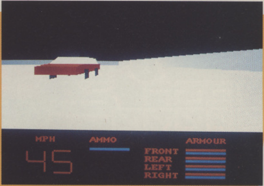
DEMOS

FEBRUARY ISN'T THE BEST TIME to make your first excited forays into the wonderful world of Shareware and Public Domain. Programmers the world over have obviously spent the last two months glued to repeats of *The Wizard Of Oz* and generally stuffing themselves with turkey, mince pies and other equally palatable Yuletide fare. Forget programming – they've been too busy with thoughts of Christmas pudding, reindeer and mistletoe.

As a result, the disks on offer at this time of year aren't usually the sort to send you into paroxysms of pleasure – unless, of course, you're the kind of person who gets kicks out of gyrating bouncy balls and enough scrolling text to reach at least twice round the M25. So here's a plea: if there's anyone out there who thinks they can produce something a lot more spine-tinglingly exciting than the disappointing bunch of disks we've had this month, get up from that couch, dust off that disk-drive and get coding!

WHAT BARGAINS?

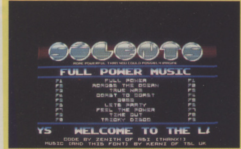
Looking for a bargain? Then don't expect too much, especially on the games front. This month's crop isn't so much an initiation into the best of public domain as a series of examples of what not to buy.



SOMEWHERE AROUND HERE there's a dastardly red saloon car, with a taste for death. Maybe Battle Cars should have been called Christine.

The best of a fairly poor bunch are two games by Kevin Kendall: *Dark Things* and *Phase II*. You can't fault either of them for graphics or presentation – Dark Things in particular features eerie cartoon-style graphics, an appropriately sinister soundtrack and a slick pre-game animation sequence. You even get a colourful map and a weird, green, bug-eyed creature which cycles up and down the Game Over screen. These all look like the hallmarks of a professionally designed game, until you start to play it. Take a good look at the screenshot – once you start playing you'll see the graphics for a maximum of 30 seconds before meeting an ignominious death. Getting beyond the first 10 centimetres of this cute platform extravaganza is a feat worthy of Superman. Anyone else is out for the count.

SILENTS' FULL POWER MUSIC – one of the more professional music demos around.



SILENTS

FULL POWER MUSIC

F1 FULL POWER F1
F2 ACROSS THE OCEAN F2
F3 TRUE NAS F3
F4 COAST TO COAST F4
F5 2088 F5
F6 LETS PARTY F6
F7 FEEL THE POWER F7
F8 TIME OUT F8
F9 TRICKY DISCO F9

YS WELCOME TO THE L/

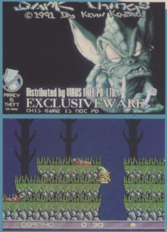
CODE BY ZENITH OF ASI (THANX!)
MUSIC (AND THIS FONT) BY KERNI OF TSL UK

MEDITATING, BURNING INCENSE and performing yoga are all perfectly acceptable activities when listening to Sonic Boom, a dreamy New Age kind of music Demo, brought to you courtesy of the Finnish Jesters.

In Phase II, a conventional horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up, at least you get a chance. What seem to be emerging as Kendall trademarks – slick presentation, pretty graphics (in this case there's even a layer or so of parallax) – are omnipresent. There's nothing all that original about the gameplay, which has you blasting every airborne alien, gun emplacement and heat-seeking missile in sight, but your chances of surviving beyond the first nanosecond are pretty good. It's still frustratingly easy to get killed, although after the odd game you do find yourself strangely driven to come back for more. Why this should be, given such below-average gameplay, remains something of a mystery.

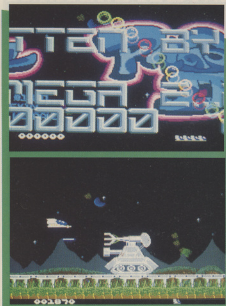
HARD DRIVING

Battle Cars isn't a bad name for a driving game. The idea behind it is quite unusual – a head-to-head battle between you and a computerised opponent set in a bizarre 3D arena, which looks like it's been designed with the aid of Incentive's *3D Construction Kit*. Your objective is simply to annihilate



IF YOU GO INTO THE WOODS today, you're in for a big surprise: Dark Things is so frustrating that death is almost a relief.

DEMOS



KEVIN KENDALL'S PHASE II: another of those 'blast everything in sight and beat the brains out of the little green men' kind of games.

WHERE TO GET THEM

The demos and games listed above are available from the companies listed here. If you want more information on a PD library's stock, some offer a free printed catalogue. Others offer a disk-based version for a small charge.

RIVERDENE PDL:
30a School Road, Tilehurst, Reading, Berkshire, RG3 5AN. Tel: (0734) 452416

VIRUS FREE PD:
31 Faringdon Road, Swindon, Wiltshire SN2 2LS. Tel: (0293) 512321

the other guy with the bazooka strapped to the bonnet of your car, while cleverly avoiding crash, collision and cartridges.

By far the best thing about the entire exercise is the speed of the 3D: once you've got the hang of the controls you can race around corners, hide behind buildings and manoeuvre feverishly close to the walls. There's just one snag – the playing area isn't really big or varied enough to sustain much one-to-one action and as you don't get to see any explosions when you blast the baddy, there's not much incentive to carry on. At least you get three difficulty levels and a natty serial-link option for your cash.

DEMOS

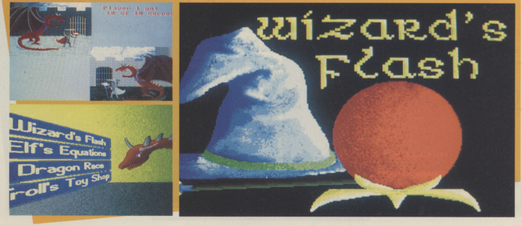
No bouncing balls or unusually animated scrolling graphics demos this month, but if you're musically inclined, the techy sound of Silents' *Full Power Music*, courtesy of Unicorn Software, is definitely worth pinning back your lugholes for. Nine slick and very professional tracks are at their best on an Amiga with 1Mb of memory and mono sound. If, on the other hand, you're feeling a little more mellow, a touch wistful, a tad airy and ethereal, you could opt for the Jesters' 9-track *Sonic Boom*: easy listening for world-weary ears.

A LESSON YOU'LL NEVER FORGET

Bored with games? Fed up with music demos? Want something different from the Public Domain? Then why not brush up on your spelling, get on top of your nine times table or remind yourself how long division works? Lots of PD libraries are positively gagging for the discerning customer to snap up a wealth of edifying bargains for the benefit of the younger computer users in their lives. There's no limit to the subject matter – you can find software which teaches you the principles of basic home safety, hones your knowledge of American states or even works out your personal biorhythms.

Math Wizard is a typical example. Its aim is to help primary school children with mental arithmetic, using four fantasy scenarios including the Troll's Toy Shop (where every correct answer wins a prize) and the wonderful world of Elf's Equations. You can specify difficulty levels, exactly the kind of problems you want to practise, and there's even a two-player game. Courtesy of the Amiga's in-built speech synthesising capabilities, you get to hear the questions spoken. Not one of the more innovative programs around, but it's cheap, cheerful and much more fun than doing the same stuff with a boring old pencil and paper.

MATH WIZARD takes the pain out of mental arithmetic.



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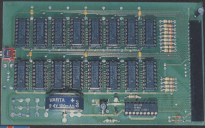

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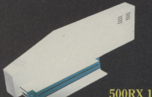

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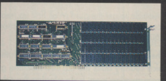

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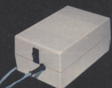

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All right, so it's not a real Uzi. What did you expect, this is a family magazine you know. And in keeping with 'the family', US Gold has very kindly offered a life-size plastic replica of the very gun that's earned a worldwide reputation for Israeli arms manufacturing and was voted 'Best Small Arm 1980' by *What Gun?* magazine. The actual kit does require some assembly but, as you can see from the picture, is real enough to fool any would-be burglar who decides your house is a plump, juicy target.

But what good would owning the world's most popular sub-machine gun be if you're not in the right frame of mind to use it? To help put this right, US Gold is also giving away a copy of *The Godfather* game for the winner and 10 copies for runners-up.

So what do you do to get the gun? Well first up, read the Warning! panel as it contains some most important information. Next, answer these three questions:

1. Who is the famous director of the three Godfather films?

2. From which country does the Uzi sub-machine gun originate?

3. Which programming team is developing the adventure version of The Godfather game?

Fill in the answers on the form below, get it signed and send it to: **Uzi When He's At Home?, The One, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London, EC1R 3AU before February 28th.**

RULES

1. Entries arriving after February 28th will be seen as a sign of disrespect and you wouldn't want that now would you?
2. Employees of EMAP Images, US Gold or the family are expressly forbidden from entering and any that do may find themselves having a little accident.
3. The editor's decision is final and can only be disputed by the Godfather. Besides, who's going to argue with him after he bit that guy's ear off? You should have seen it, blood everywhere...

WARNING!

The law requires that you should either be over 16 years of age or have your parent's/guardian's permission to have one of these kits. We at The One respect this and therefore insist that if you are under 16, you get your parent's or guardian's permission to enter this competition. Get them to sign on the entry form and all should be well.

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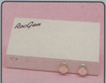

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TIPS

FEBRUARY 1992

Oh No! More Lemmings, Magic Pockets Part 2, MicroProse Golf and Jimmy White's Whirlwind Snooker. Right, that's the contents taken care of. Now I need your help. Over the past few months I've noticed this continuing trend of putting silly pictures in my photo slot on the Review Contents page. Now a joke's a joke, but it's starting to go too far. Which is where you come in. This is the mag of the people (supposedly) so I want you to start writing letters of protest. Send your We Want Brian's Photo letters to the usual address and we'll see if we can't rock the foundations.

BRIAN 'ANGRY' NESBITT

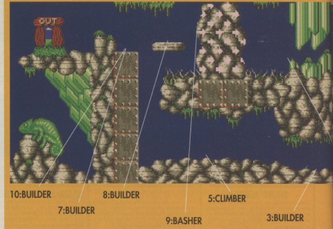
OH NO M

THE CANDLE HAS BEEN BURNED so long at both ends that the flames have met in the middle, the midnight oil has just about run out, the grass has grown long under our feet and we're a gang of gibbering idiots… but it's all been worth it, as now (with a little help from DMA Design and reader Robert Phelps of Stroud in Gloucestershire) we can bring you help with that most compulsive and annoying follow-up, *Oh No! More Lemmings*.

Obviously, we haven't tried to bring you a step-by-step guide to how to finish every single level, but what we have done is shown you a way through our own particular favourites. We'd be interested to know if any of you have found any other ways to solve these particular puzzles – and we'd almost kill to find out how to finish that final screen.

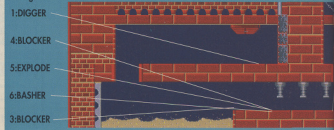
ROCKY VI

Number Of Lemmings: 80 98% To be Saved Release Rate: 1 Time: 3 minutes Rating: Crazy



THE SILENCE OF THE LEMMINGS

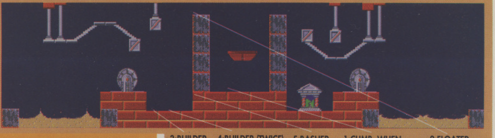
Number Of Lemmings: 50 80% To be Saved Release Rate: 5 Time: 3 minutes Rating: Wild

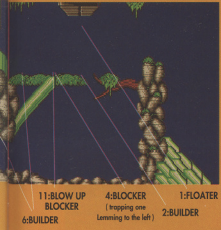


ORE LEMMINGS!

AND NOW THE END IS NEAR

Number Of Lemmings: 50 100% To be Saved Release Rate: 1 Time: 3 minutes Rating: Crazy

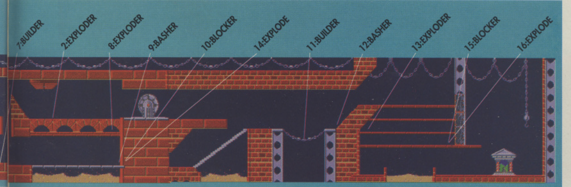

3:BUILDER
4:BUILDER (TWICE) POSITION HAS TO BE PIXEL PERFECT
5:BASHER
1:CLIMB, WHEN FACING LEFT
2:FLOATER


11:BLOW UP BLOCKER
4:BLOCKER (trapping one Lemming to the left)
1:FLOATER
2:BUILDER
6:BUILDER

THE FINE ART OF LIFE SAVING

The maps and annotations printed here represent just a few of our own favourites, solved in the simplest way that we can find. However, while we can guarantee that each of these solutions works, you're still going to have to indulge in a little 'trial and error', as some of the more difficult puzzles require near perfect timing and/or positioning. Anyhow, this will only add to the enjoyment, won't it?

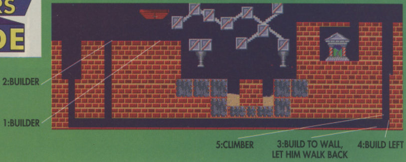
One handy tip which might help you through some of the stickier moments is that if you pause the game (using either the 'paws' icon or the P key), you can then cycle through the Lemming options using Z and X before restarting.


7:BUILDER
2:EXPLODER
8:EXPLODER
9:BASHER
10:BLOCKER
14:EXPLODE
11:BUILDER
12:BASHER
13:EXPLODER
15:BLOCKER
16:EXPLODE

TAKE CARE, SWEETIE

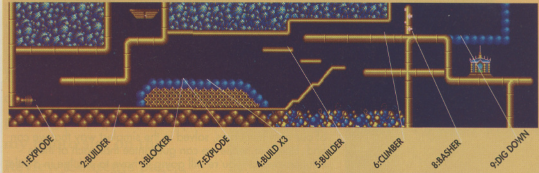
Number Of Lemmings: 1 100% To be Saved Release Rate: 1 Time: 3 minutes Rating: Wild

This little beauty is more or less straightforward – until you get to the bottom right-hand corner! Timing is essential here, but a little practice and it *will* work.


2:BUILDER
1:BUILDER
5:CLIMBER
3:BUILD TO WALL, LET HIM WALK BACK
4:BUILD LEFT

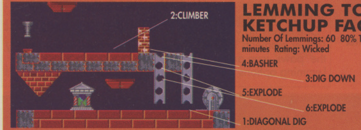
DON'T PANIC

Number Of Lemmings: 50 90% To be Saved Release Rate: 5 Time: 3 minutes Rating: Crazy

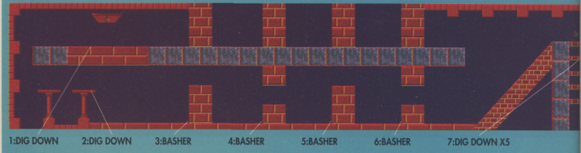

1:EXPLODE
2:BUILDER
3:BLOCKER
7:EXPLODE
4:BUILD X3
5:BUILDER
6:CLIMBER
8:BASHER
9:DIG DOWN

LEMMING TOMATO KETCHUP FACILITY

Number Of Lemmings: 60 80% To be Saved Release Rate: 1 Time: 2 minutes Rating: Wicked


2:CLIMBER
4:BASHER
3:DIG DOWN
5:EXPLODE
6:EXPLODE
1:DIAGONAL DIG

It may not look very impressive, but this is quite a tricky customer. It's crucial that you execute action number 3 in exactly the right spot, otherwise the whole thing will come tumbling down around your ears.


1:DIG DOWN
2:DIG DOWN
3:BASHER
4:BASHER
5:BASHER
6:BASHER
7:DIG DOWN X5

And now, for those of you who are too lazy to play all the way through yourselves, here are the codes to every single level...

TAME

1 Down And Out Lemmings	
2 Rent A Lemming	IHRTDLCCAR
3 Undercover Lemming	LRTDLCADAO
4 Downwardly Mobile Lemmings	RTDLCILEAH
5 Snuggle Up To A Lemming	TDLCAHVFAQ
6 Intsy Wintsy... Lemming	DLCIHVTGAJ
7 Who's That Lemming	LCALVTDHAG
8 Danger Zone	CILVTDLIAP
9 And Now This...	CAIPUDLJAQ
10 New Lemmings On The Block	IHRUDLCKAK
11 With Compliments	LRUDLCALAH
12 Citizen Lemming	RUDLCILMAQ
13 Thunder Lemmings Are Go	UDLCAHVNAJ
14 Get A Little Extra Help	DLCIHVUOAS
15 Not Just A Pretty Lemming	LCALVUDPAP
16 Gone With The Lemmings	CILVUDLQAI
17 Honey, I saved The Lemmings	CAHRTFLBBL
18 Lemmings For Presidents	IHRTFLCCBE
19 Lemming Productions Present	LRTFLCADBR
20 Custom Built For Lemmings	RTFLCILEBK

CRAZY

1 Quote: "That's A Good Level"	TFLCAHVFBD
2 Dolly Dimple	FLCIHVTGBM
3 Many Lemmings Make Level Work	LCALVTFHBJ
4 Lemming Express	CILVTFLIBS
5 24 Hour Lemathon	CAHRUFLJBE
6 The Stack	IHRUFLCKBN
7 And Now, The End Is Near	LRUFLCALBK
8 Keep On Trucking	RUFLCILMBD
9 On The Antarctic Coast	UFLCAHVNBM
10 Rocky VI	FLCIHVUOBF
11 No Problemming!	LCALVUFPBS
12 Lemming Friendly	CILVUFLQBL
13 It's A Trade Off	CAHRTDMBCL
14 Time Waits For No Lemming	IHRTDMCCCE
15 Worra Load Of Old Blocks	LRTDMCADCR
16 Across The Gap	RTDMCILECK
17 Digging For Victory	TDMCAHVFCD
18 No Problem	DMCIHVTGCM
19 Don't Panic	MCALVTDHCJ
20 Ice Ice Lemming	CILVTDMICS

WILD

1 PoP YoR ToP	CAHRUDMJCE
2 Lemming Hotel	IHRUDMCKCN
3 Lemming Rhythms	LRUDMCALCK
4 Meeting Adjourned	PUDMCKLMCD
5 Lemming Head	UDMCAHVNCM
6 Just A Quicky	DMCIHVUOCF
7 You Take The High Road	MCALVUDPCS
8 It's A Tight Fit	CILVUDMQCL
9 Ice Station Lemming	CAHRTFMBDO
10 Higgledy Piggledy	IHRTFMCCDH
11 Mutiny On The Bounty	LRTFMCADDE
12 Snow Joke	RTFMCILEDN
13 Onward And Upward	TFMCAHVFDG
14 Ice Spy	FMCIHVTGDP
15 The Silence Of The Lemmings	MCALVTFHDM
16 Take Care, Sweetie	CILVTFMIDF
17 The Chain With No Name	CAHRUFMJDH
18 Dr. Lemminggood	IHRUFMCKDQ
19 Lemmingdelica	LRUFMCALDN
20 Got Anything... Lemmingy??	RUFMCILMDG

WICKED

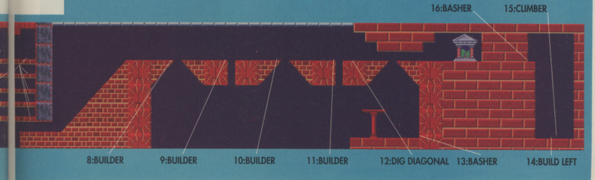
1 LeMming ToMato KetchUp FAcility	UFMCAHVNDP
2 Introducing SUPERLEMMING	FMCIHVUODI
3 This Corrosion	MCALVUFPDF
4 Oh No! It's The 4TH DIMENSION	CILVUFMQDO
5 Chill Out!	GAHRTDLBEQ
6 PoP TiL YoU DrOp	IHRTDLGCEJ
7 Last Lemming To Lemmingcentral	LRTDLGADEG
8 A Towering Problem	RTDLGILEEP
9 How On Earth?	TDLGAHVFEI
10 Temple Of Love	DLGIHVTGER
11 Rocky Road	LGALVTDHEO
12 Suicidal Tendencies	GILVTDLIEH
13 Almost Nearly Virtual Reality	GAHRUDLJEJ
14 The Lemming Learning Curve	IHRUDLGKES
15 Spam, Spam, Spam, Egg And Lemming	LRUDLGALEP
16 Five Alive	RUDLGILMEI
17 Down The Tube	UDLGAHVNER
18 Lots moRe wHeRe TheY caMe fRom	DLGIHVUOEK
19 Up, Down Or Round And Round	LGALVUDPEH
20 The Lemming Funhouse	GILVUDLQEQ

HAVOC

1 Tubular Lemmings	GAHRTFLBFD
2 Be More Than Just A Number	IHRTFLGCFM
3 It's The Price You Have To Pay	LRTFLGADFJ
4 The Race Against Cliches	RTFLGILEFS
5 There's Madness In The Method	TFLGAHVFFL
6 Now Get Out Of That	FLGIHVTGFE
7 Creature Discomforts	LGALVTFHFR
8 Lemming About Town	GILVTFLIFK
9 AAAAAARRRRRRGGGGGGHHHHHH!!!!!!	GAHRUFLJFM
10 Flow Control	IHRUFLGKFF
11 Welcome To The Party, Pal!	LRUFLGALFS
12 It's All A Matter Of Timing	RUFLGILMFL
13 Highland Fling	UFLGAHVNFE
14 Synchronised Lemming	FLGHIVUOFN
15 Have An Ice Day	LGALVUFPFK
16 Scaling The Heights	GILVUFLQFD
17 Where Lemmings Dare	GAHRTDMBGD
18 Lemmings In A Situation	IHRTDMGCGM
19 Looks A Bit Nippy Out There	LRTDMGADGJ
20 LOoK BrFoRe yoU LeAp	RTDMGILEGS

INTRODUCING SUPERLEMMING

Number Of Lemmings: 1 100% To be Saved Release Rate: 1 Time: 4 minutes Rating: Wicked



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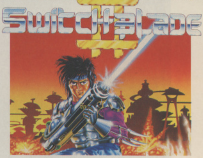
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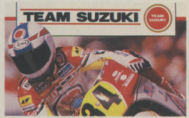
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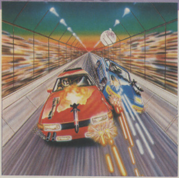

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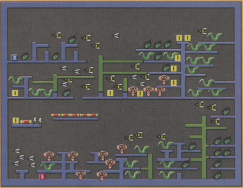
BRIAN NESBITT'S PLAYERS GUIDE

MAGIC POCKETS

Time once again to don those shades, stand around with your arms crossed menacingly and look cooler than cool as the Bitmaps take us through part two of...

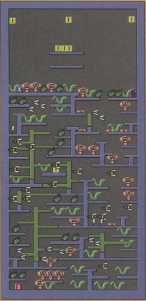
Section 7



KEY

X Exit
S Bitkid start
Vulture
Powerup
Piranha
Sweets
Toy
Clam
Crab
Jelly fish
Item

Section 9



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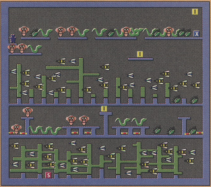
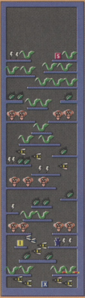
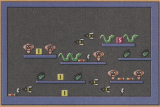






The Secret Room

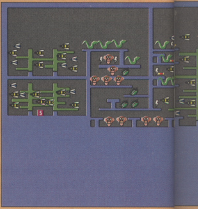
Section 10

THE JUNGLE SECTIONS

Beat the Gorilla

Take the glove quickly and be prepared to move. The best way to win is to move close to the gorilla, punch a couple of times and move away. Don't let him jump on you or trap you in a corner. If you get stunned, wait for him to beat his chest before moving in again. He only takes 10 hits, so don't lose your cool.

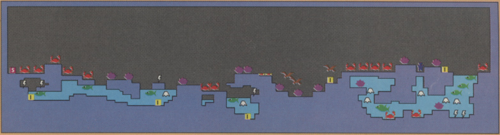
Section 11



KEY

X Exit
S Bitkid start
Plant grow path
Powerup
Venus fly-trap
Sweets
Toy
Bee
Gnat
Chimp
Snake
Item

Section 12



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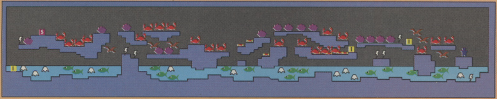
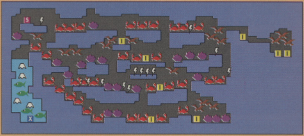


Section 14



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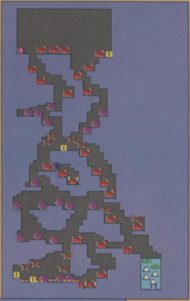
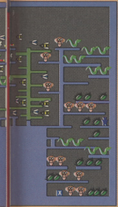


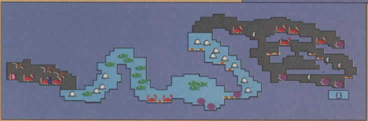


THE LAKE SECTIONS

Find the Treasure

This is a timed bonus section. Move as quickly as possible, pick up sweets casually and don't stop. Follow the arrow and see where it takes you. There are five different sections, one is picked at random. The most important thing of all is to find the exit, otherwise you don't receive the points you've collected.

Section 16



BRIAN NESBITT'S

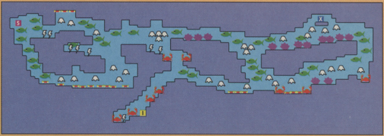
PLAYERS GUIDE

THE MOUNTAIN SECTIONS

Transport to Home
Create one silver and one gold star to transport to the end room. First collect 5,000 points, ensure you burst to clear the kill count and trap for a silver star. Kill the remaining 10 nasties and trap to get a gold star and transport.

The Last Room
Run to get a hopper or blast the snowmen to drop one. Collect the bonus and exit.

Section 17



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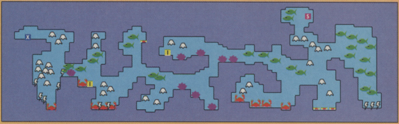

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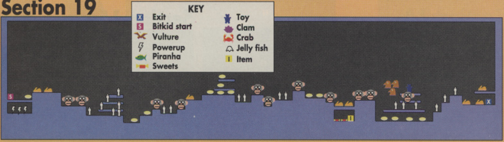
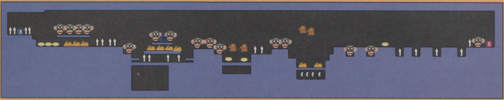


KEY

X Exit	Toy
S Bitkid start	Clam
Vulture	Crab
ϟ Powerup	Jelly fish
Piranha	I Item
Sweets	

Section 20



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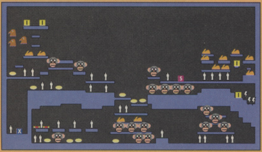

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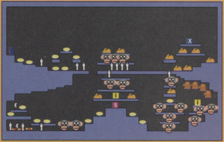

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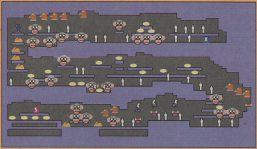

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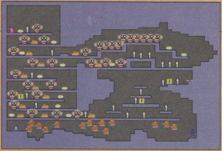

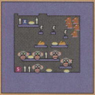

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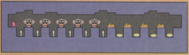
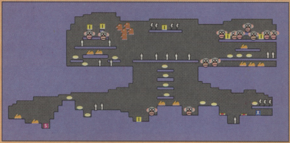


The Endgame World

Section 25



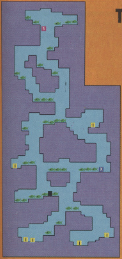
KEY

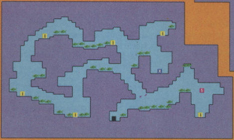
- X Exit
- S Bitkid start
- Eggmen
- Powerup
- Snowmen
- Sweets
- Toy
- Hares
- Eagles
- Yetis
- I Item

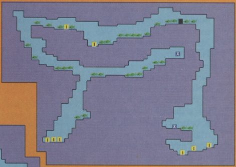
Treasure Worlds

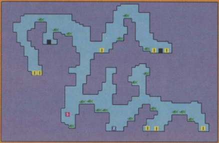
KEY

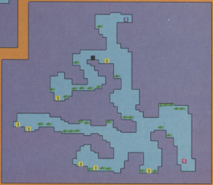
- X Exit
- S Bitkid start
- ■ Oxygen
- Powerup
- Piranha
- Sweets
- Toy
- Clam
- Crab
- Jelly fish
- I Item











BRIAN NESBITT'S HELPING HANDS

HAPPY NEW YEAR TO YOU ALL (all right, I know it's practically February but I've only just recovered!) Anyway, what a festive time I've had recently. Dancing naked around the remains of the Christmas tree in Trafalgar Square, sleeping through the second showing of *The Empire Strikes Back* on the telly (I still haven't seen that film!), after stuffing myself full of leftover Chrissy pudding and then not remembering exactly what I did on New Year's Eve, save for the fact that it involved three ounces of New Zealand butter, several bags of cotton wool buds, a 1979 Abba album cover and a large number of traffic cones that were gathered through dubious means from the M1 late that night (and more than my fair share of chocolate liqueurs I'll bet)! Still, I've managed to stagger back into work, so here we go again.

STAR TIP: JAMES POND

What with the superlative sequel just hitting the shelves and this less-superlative-but-still-pretty-good prequel about to come out on budget, what better time than now to let you in on a shortcut to take you straight to level six? Let Jonathan Sandridge of Oxford explain:

"There's a quick and easy route to level six in the game. All you need to do is rescue all the lobsters on level one (easier said than done, but it is worth it) and wait for it to say EXIT OPEN. Next, make your way back to the beginning of the level and enter the rock to be transported directly to level six. Not bad huh?"

Not bad at all, Jonathan. £50 of top-notch software is on its way.

CHEATS

IVANHOE
While playing the game type ZOBINETTE. Now, pushing N skips a level and the Del key kills everything on the screen.
RODLAND
Start a game, pause it and push the Help key five times. Restart and you should have infinite lives.
FROM: SIMON WRIGHT, STOCKPORT, CHESHIRE

WARZONE
For infinite lives press F1, F2 and F3 on the title screen.
XENON II
Pause the game and type RUSSIAN AIR. Now unpause and press N to skip levels.
THE SIMPSONS: BART VS THE SPACE MUTANTS
On the title screen (the one with Bart's family watching TV) type COWABUNGA. When you start the game, you should have infinite lives.
FROM: ERIN RAEBOURN, EDINBURGH

THE RUNNING MAN
To get infinite energy, get yourself a high score and enter your name as DdliSsKk (upper and lower case).
FROM: VINCENT GREY, MANCHESTER

JIMMY WHITE'S WHIRLWIND SNOOKER

It's the moment we've all been waiting for! Even as I speak, Archer Maclean is making his way into the studio and, yes, I can see a piece of paper in his hand. It has to be it. Archer Maclean is about to reveal the cheat mode to end all cheat modes. I can barely contain my excitement, this truly has to be the most momentous day in the history of cheats pages all over the world. Any moment now we'll be... wait a minute, he's stepping up to the podium right now. This is it, this is the moment:

"To see the computer obtain a perfect 147 break every time simply type the following code after entering the Trickshot menu: F7, F4, F1. You should hear a double click. Now go back to the main menu, enter the demo mode (or play against Jimmy) and you should witness a perfect 147."

So you don't get to win then, Archer?

"Er... no"

Ah. (accompanied by sounds of disgruntled reporters filing out of the press conference).

LEVEL CODES – NIGHT SHIFT

Lucasfilm isn't renowned for its arcade games, but *Night Shift* was certainly a brave stab. If you've been stuck at the early stages of toy manufacturing for some time, Matt Steiner of Chiswick, London may just have an answer to your problems.

Level	Code
2	Cherry, Banana, Banana, Lemon
3	Banana, Cherry, Pineapple, Plum
4	Pineapple, Lemon, Pineapple, Pineapple
5	Pineapple, Pineapple, Lemon, Cherry
6	Cherry, Plum, Plum, Pineapple
7	Cherry, Pineapple, Lemon, Banana
8	Pineapple, Banana, Pineapple, Cherry
9	Pineapple, Lemon, Lemon, Cherry
10	Lemon, Banana, Plum, Plum

Dear Brian,
Nine months ago I bought *Codename: Iceman*. It's a great adventure and I've been stuck a couple of times and managed to solve the problems myself. But this time it's too much. I'm getting nowhere.

When I'm out diving, I come to this place with rocks and fish all over. When I try to surface I die and the computer tells me that I should have created some kind of a diversion. How do I do that?
Allan Jørgensen, 9990 Sleagen, Denmark

What everyday occurrence is guaranteed to turn heads for miles around? Yes, an oil rig explosion! Before you leave the submarine, take a look through the periscope to find the co-ordinates of the nearby rig, then ask the sonar man for its distance. Program both numbers into the little diving machine and take along some explosives (found in the missile room). Plant the bomb and let it light up the sky.

Dear Brian,
Could you help me with a game called *Dragonflight*? I've looked through magazines for hints on this game since it was released last year. The problems I am having are with the riddles in the dungeons:
1. What is the name of the dungeon in the desert?
2. What is the name of the dungeon on the island north of Scatterbone?
3. What is the answer to the riddle in the dungeon in the swamps on Dorithannon, next to Bagnol? The riddle is "Not THAT easy, adventurers".
4. What are the answers to the riddles in dungeon four, furthest west behind the mountains? The riddles I refer to are the ones on Sulvalion, Strength, Recovery and Oblivion. They can be found on level nine of the dungeon.
5. Can you tell me what items I need to show or give to the following people to get a response: Dormas in Bagnol, Lagitan in Luthag and Fardrak in Negame?
6. Can you tell me where old Nollabi can be found in Nimraviel?
Mark Green, Canning Town, London

Sorry Mark, you're not the only one after the answers, I want them too. If anybody knows, I'd really appreciate your sending them my way. I'll make good use of them (and I dare say Mark will too).

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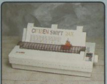
Colour Option Extra - See Accessories

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BRIAN
NESBITT'S
PLAYERS
GUIDE

Stuck in a divot? Never mind old bean, your handicap should soon be dropping thanks to Lee Hodgson and Mark Davies (the men behind the clubs).

MICROPROSE

IT'S BEST TO START as a Novice: although you can't improve your handicap or save profiles, you can concentrate on the basics – course strategy and power. When it comes to short pitching, you'll need to learn from experience how much power to apply to get the distance needed.

Watch your club distances and use the binoculars to check your landing area for hidden traps. Check your lie: if the ball's in deep grass you won't get the usual power. When playing with handicaps, remember the wind.

TEEING UP

This is the one time you're guaranteed a perfect lie and flat ground, yet this shot often goes wrong, leaving you in the rough. Think about your strategy for the hole and play sensibly. Use the tee icon to increase your options; move across the tee to straighten out dog-leg holes and to get a better view around trees. Tee off from the highest position when you want to increase your pitch distance to clear a hazard, but beware that this makes the shot more difficult. You'll get a longer overall distance from the lower tee position if there's a headwind.

PUTTING

Putting is a whole new game in itself. Remember that the halfway mark on the putting meter represents the optimum flat power, whatever the distance of the putt. Hit harder if the putt is uphill or less hard if downhill – check the slope by clicking the right mouse button to see the path to the hole from side on. The only other thing to worry about is the sideslope – use the grid icon to see whether this is left-to-right or right-to-left and compensate by playing to the left or to the right respectively.

Expert putters should take note of the speed of the green they are playing on. Fast greens provide a very slippery surface – the ball will travel slower on its way to the hole, so you need to compensate more for the slope. Wind is more likely to push the ball off course on a fast green.

Always try to pitch below the hole if there's a slope (check with the grid before your pitch): an uphill putt is easier than a downhill. When you start saving your profile, an average of 1.5 putts per green is very good, but lower putting averages are possible – obviously 1.0 is perfect.

STANCE

MicroProse Golf allows you to alter your stance and move your feet relative to the ball, so you can adapt for the slope you're playing off and use a range of special shots. With the stance closed (left foot moved in) it's easier to play the draw shot (slightly hooked to the left), while a fade is easier with the stance open. The open stance is also useful for playing off steep right-to-left slopes, and vice-versa for the closed stance. If you're unsure, stick to the default 'square-on' position.

Positioning the ball between your feet has a totally different effect. The driver is naturally played with the ball at the very front of your stance, near the left foot; this increases the loft and decreases backspin for further distance. Shorter clubs are usually played with the ball much further back (remember that you move your feet relative to the ball as, once in play, it's illegal to reposition the ball). If you alter the position greatly from the default, you risk reducing the power you can apply to the shot, but you might want to play the ball from the back of the stance to compensate for a fluffy lie, or to generate more backspin to stop a short pitch.

WIND

The highest winds are on the links course, Mountsummer Point, but the most unpredictable gusts are at Fairdale Park. When playing in a wind, remember that the lower and harder your shot, the less it will be affected. Use a low tee to punch into a headwind, but put the tee up to benefit from the increased distance possible with a tailwind. For approach shots, take anything up to four clubs more in a strong headwind.

A strong crosswind can be a problem. Medium-length approach shots are most at risk – longer clubs with lower loft angles won't be pushed off course so much, and for short pitches (30 yards or less) the ball won't rise high enough to get into the stronger wind levels. You'll have to learn by experience, but remember to aim well to the left or the right for those high-wind approach shots; beginners almost always under compensate. Use the Reverse View camera to assess the wind's full effect on a shot.

BUNKER PLAY

Don't despair if you land in a greenside bunker – master the sand iron and you'll be able to play to the pin every time. Remember that the sand wedge has a very high loft, which is important to scoop the ball out of a buried lie. The sand wedge is sensitive to the slope it is played off – when playing from the back of the bunker you are likely to be playing off a downslope; the shot will travel lower, and will gain more forward distance than you expect. Conversely, from the front face of the bunker, the ball will come down vertically and backspin towards you. Bear this in mind when setting the power of the shot.

If you've taken in all the advice you should notice an immediate effect on your scores. The rest takes practice and the best way to get this is to play in one of the longer tournaments. You'll have a chance to master a single course over two or four competitive rounds, and you'll learn to perform under pressure. Soon you'll become a real pro, start beating the head-to-head players and maybe even challenge the course records (which stand between nine and 14 under par).

THE 6 HARDEST HOLES

Ballybrook Hole 18 (Par 5)
First Shot: Use the far right tee position and tee up on the top position to gain enough height to clear the trees.
Second Shot: If you have anything other than a perfect lie, use a short pitch to the edge of the brook. From a good or fluffy lie, use a three wood to the right of the bunkers guarding the green, as it is large and has very difficult contours.

Ballybrook Hole 15 (Par 4)
First Shot: Play to the left side of the fairway, near the stream. It's up to you how far left to aim, it gets harder to carry the stream but leaves you further from the trees.
Second Shot: The green's long uphill slope will kill the bounce and leave you short. A good approach is to take two clubs more and underpower. The lower lofts on longer clubs will help you roll up the slope.

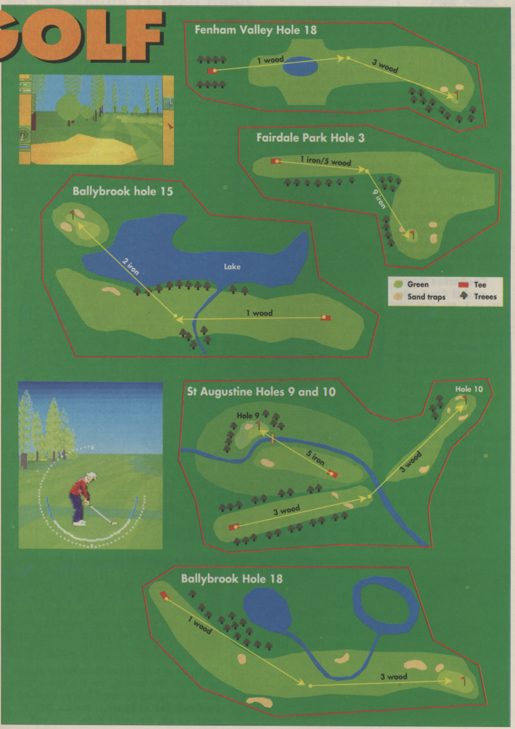
Fairdale Park Hole 3 (Par 4)
First Shot: The fairway is very narrow, so aim down the middle using a five wood or a one iron for accuracy. You should stop in the gap between the copses on the right-hand side.
Second Shot: The green slopes right to left so aim right to compensate for the kick on pitching. Don't be afraid of the trees since a full-power nine iron has sufficient loft to clear them.

St Augustine Hole 9 (Par 3)
Unless you've a scratch handicap, you'll be playing off the front tee which is 30 yards forward, giving a clearer view of the green. Target the right side of the green as the slopes will funnel the ball to the left. Don't worry if you tee from the back, but pitch accurately – otherwise you'll be three-putting.

St Augustine Hole 10 (Par 4)
First Shot: Get as close as possible to the water's near edge to have a chance of reaching the green. An overpowered three wood is ideal.
Second Shot: The green is hidden by obstacles, but by using a three wood and aiming for the right-hand side of the green, you should make par.

Fenham Valley Hole 18 (Par 5)
First Shot: The lake looks threatening, but keep your cool, raise your tee and it will be easy to clear. You should pitch to the left hand side of the fairway for a good view of the green.
Second Shot: A three wood over the trees and bunkers is possible, but the green is small. Check it before your shot to see if the flag is on the closer or the lower, back tier. It's best to play a long iron short of the bunkers and then pitch to the pin.

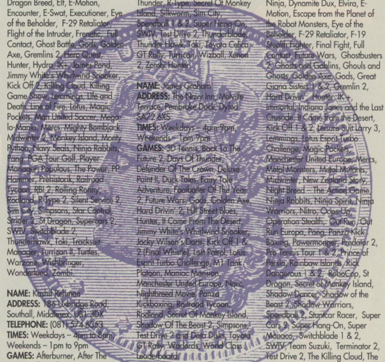
GOLF



Fenham Valley Hole 18
1 wood
3 wood
Fairdale Park Hole 3
1 iron/5 wood
9 iron
Ballybrook hole 15
2 iron
Lake
1 wood
Green
Tee
Sand traps
Treees
St Augustine Holes 9 and 10
Hole 9
Hole 10
5 iron
3 wood
3 wood
Ballybrook Hole 18
1 wood
3 wood

BRIAN NESBITT'S CONTACTS

BONJOUR MON LIDDLE PETIT POIS! 1992 (and all that) is here and I'm just bursting to expose my prize assets to the continent! Le Contacts Page is where I'm heading (along with Das Contactz Pagen, El Contactos Pago and Il Contacta Paga). No longer will your calls for help be limited to just Joe Bloggs of Scunthorpe and Jane Doe of Clacton on Sea, now your queries on level five of *Xenon 2* will be handled by Jacque Bloggs of Lyon and Jacqui Doe of Venice. Ahh, Europe! Vive le Nesbitt! Thank 'evan for little girls la la la...



NAME: Mark Goodinson
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GAMES: Atomic Robokid, Awesome, Back To The Future 2, Beach Volley, Beast II, Blade Warrior, Blues Brothers, Brat, Cadaver – Last Supper, Carrier Command, Centurion, Chuck Rock, Colditz, Cruise for a Corpse, Dragon Breed, Elf, E-Motion, Encounter, E-Swat, Executioner, Eye of the Beholder, F-29 Retaliator, Flight of the Intruder, Frenetic, Full Contact, Ghost Battle, Gods, Golden Axe, Gremlins 2, Hero Quest, Hunter, Hydra, IK+, James Pond, Jimmy White's Whirlwind Snooker, Kick Off 2, Killing Cloud, Killing Game Show, Lemmings, Life and Death, Line of Fire, Lotus, Magic Pockets, Man United Soccer, Mega-lo-Mania, Mercs, Mighty Bombjack, Midwinter 2, Monkey Island, Monty Python, Navy Seals, Ninja Rabbits, Pang, PGA Tour Golf, Player Manager, Populous, The Power, PP Hammer, Prehistorik, Railroad Tycoon, RBI 2, Rolling Ronny, Rodland, R Type 2, Silent Service 2, Sim City, Simpsons, Star Control, Strider 2, St Dragon, Supercars 2, SWIV, Switchblade 2, Thunderhawk, Toki, Tracksuit Manager, Turrican II, Turtles, Warzone, Wishbringer, Wonderland, Zombi.

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GAMES: Afterburner, After The War, Back To The Future 2, Batman The Movie, Battle Squadron, Beach Volley, Budokan, Chase HQ 1 & 2, Double Dragon 1 & 2, Dragon Ninja, Forgotten Worlds, Future Basketball, Gods, Golden Axe, Hybris, IK+, Ikari Warriors, Indiana Jones And The Last Crusade (Arcade), Insanity Flight, Ivanhoe, Kick Off 1 & 2, The Killing Cloud, Klax, Magic Pockets, Manchester United, Midnight Resistance, Navy Seals, Ninja Rabbits, Outrun, Predator 2, Panza Kick Boxing, Rainbow Islands, Robin Hood, Robocop 1 & 2, Rick Dangerous, Rockstar Ate My Hamster, Rolling Thunder, R-Type, Secret Of Monkey Island, Silkworm, Sim City, Speedball 1 & 2, Super Hang-On, SWIV, Test Drive 2, Thunderblade, Thunder Hawk, Toki, Toyota Celica GT Rally, Turrican, Wizball, Xenon 2, Zombi Hunter.

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Weekends – 1pm-9pm
GAMES: 3D Tennis, Back To The Future 2, Days Of Thunder, Defender Of The Crown, Deluxe Paint II, Duck Tales, Fairy Tale Adventure, Footballer Of The Year 2, Future Wars, Gods, Golden Axe, Hard Drivin' 2, Hill Street Blues, Hunter, It Came From The Desert, Jimmy White's Whirlwind Snooker, Jocky Wilson's Darts, Kick Off 1 & 2 (Final Whistle), Lost Patrol, Lotus Esprit Turbo Challenge, M1 Tank Platoon, Maniac Mansion, Manchester United Europe, Narc, Nightbreed Movie, Panza Kickboxing, Railroad Tycoon, Rodland, Secret Of Monkey Island, Shadow Of The Beast 2, Simpsons, Test Drive 2 and Data Disks, Toyota GT Rally, Warlords, World Class Leaderboard.

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GAMES: Afterburner 2, Arkanoiod 1 & 2, Axel's Magic Hammer, Back to the Future 2, Bart Simpson vs the Space Mutants, Batman the Movie, Battlechess, Battle Squadron, Beach Volley, Beverly Hills Cop, Blood Money, Blues Brothers, Brat, Car Vup, Chase HQ 1 & 2, Chuck Rock, Continental Circus, Days of Thunder, Defender 2, Double Dragon 2, Dragon Breed, Dragon Ninja, Dynamite Dux, Elvira, E-Motion, Escape from the Planet of the Robot Monsters, Eye of the Beholder, F-29 Retaliator, F-19 Stealth Fighter, Final Fight, Full Contact, Future Wars, Ghostbusters 2, Ghosts and Goblins, Ghouls and Ghosts, Golden Axe, Gods, Great Giana Sisters 1 & 2, Gremlin 2, Hard Drivin', Hunter, IK +, Immortal, Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade, It Came from the Desert, Kick Off 1 & 2, Leisure Suit Larry 3, Lemmings, Lotus Esprit Turbo Challenge, Magic Pockets, Manchester United Europe, Mercs, Metal Monsters, Metal Mutants, Midwinter, New Zealand Story, Night Breed – The Action Game, Ninja Rabbits, Ninja Spirit, Ninja Warriors, Nitro, Oops-Up, Operation Stealth, Out Run, Out Run Europa, Pang, Panza Kick Boxing, Powermonger, Predator 2, Pro Tennis Tour 1 & 2, Prince of Persia, Rainbow Islands, Rick Dangerous 1 & 2, RoboCop, St Dragon, Secret of Monkey Island, Shadow Dancer, Shadow of the Beast 2, Shadow Warriors, Speedball 2, Stuntcar Racer, Super Cars 2, Super Hang-On, Super Monaco, Switchblade 1 & 2, SWIV, Team Suzuki, Terminator 2, Test Drive 2, The Killing Cloud, The Killing Game Show, Toki, Torvak the Warrior, Trivial Pursuit, Turrican 1&2, Viz, Warzone, Wings, Xenon II Megablast.

IF YOU ARE GOING to use a Contact, then please follow these two guidelines:

1. Respect the times printed. There's nothing worse than just drifting off to sleep at night when the phone rings (and contrary to popular belief, 'sensible times only' does not mean three in the morning).
2. Please send an S.A.E. for written queries.

So you think you've got what it takes to be a Contact huh? You think that you can withstand the pressure of answering 20 phone calls a minute while writing seven replies? Okay, send us your details as described and we'll weed out the men from the boys.

Name:
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Telephone Number:
Times To Call:
List Of Games Completed (in *alphabetical* order):

To give you something to do when the phone stops ringing, we'll send you a free piece of software from our coffers. Send everything to: **Contacts, The One For Amiga Games, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London, EC1R 3AU.**

WARNING!!

Don't sleep in the subway darling, don't sleep in the pouring rain. And don't send me your telephone number without getting your parent's permission. It ain't the done thing, know what I mean?

Well, that's it, there's nothing more to come. Go home, go on, there's no point hanging around here, I won't be back for at least... ooh... 30 days or so. So until then, see ya!

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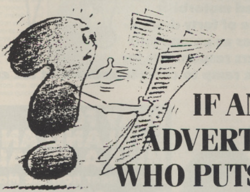

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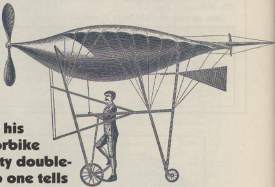

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